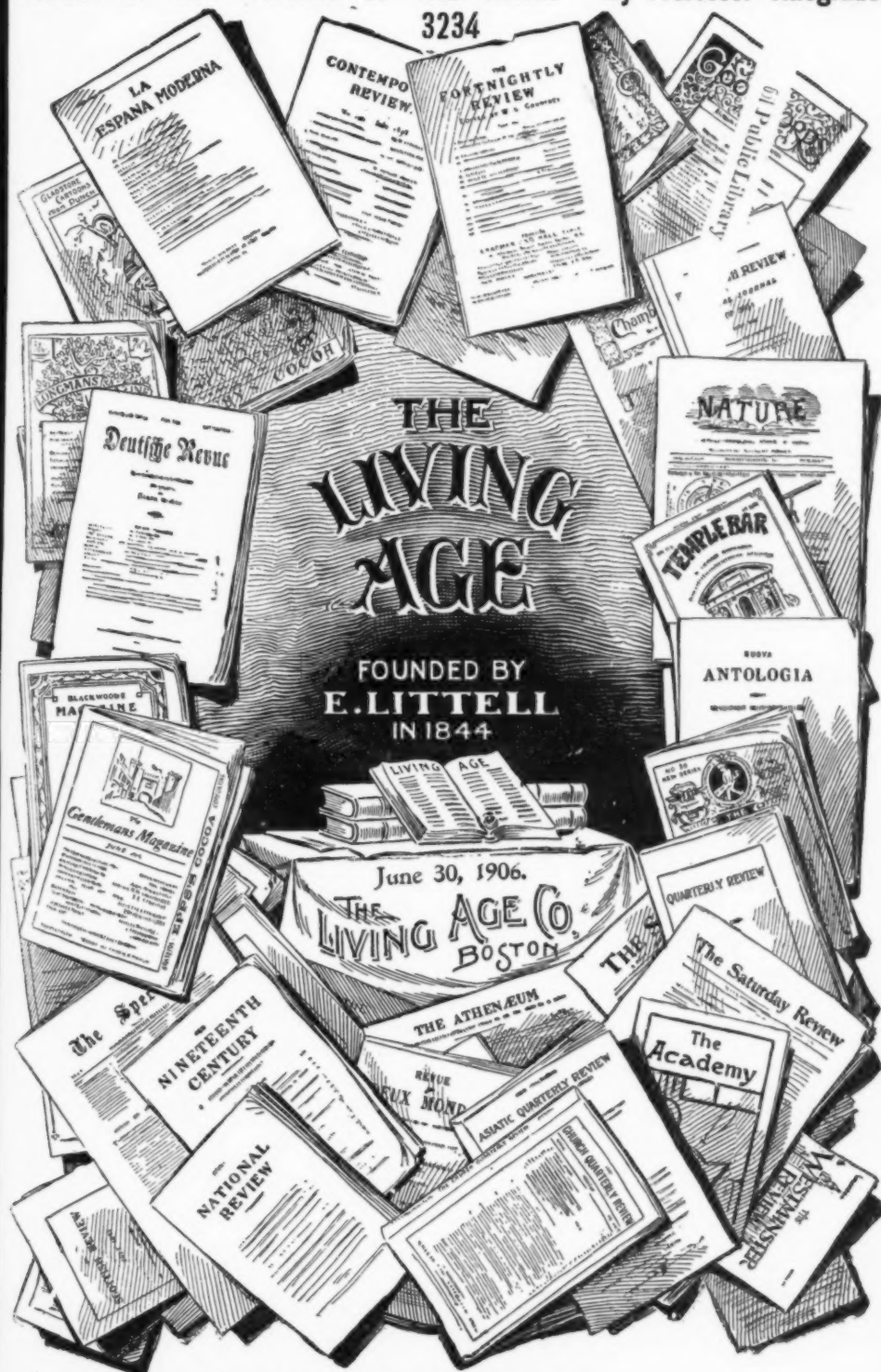


RUSSIA AT THE PARTING OF THE WAYS. By Professor Vinogradoff.

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THE FIGHTER.

When from the ranks of battle I drop
out
Into the dark and silence, shall I rest
In placid cold oblivion, or my breast
Yearn for the exultation of hot strife,
And my lips long to give the rallying
shout
Among the shades for one last des-
perate bout
With the o'erwhelming force that ruth-
less life—
The unconquerable, beloved antagonist—
Doth range against all men who dare
resist
His iron law, and flaunt the rebel crest?

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson.

The Academy.

EDEN GARDEN.

(A Somerset Ballad.)

There's a dream that comes when day-
light's dying,
And the noisy craws are homewards
flying;
When the tews and toils of day are
ended,
The maids abed, and the cattle tended;
And I watch the vields grow dim and
dimmer
In summer sunset's fading glimmer,
While to and fro the bats go flitting,
About the porch where I be sitting;
And there I th' dusk I smoke and
ponder,
Till forth on the wings of my dream I
wander.
Zims as some gentle sperrit bore me
To where my child has gone before me.
Full forty years their tale have written
On my brow by sin and sorrow smitten;
But her white soul hath won my
pardon,
And opened the geates of Eden Garden.

Oh! Eden Garden's all a-flower,
By angels made for a children's bower;
And our lost little ones go thither,—
Flowers of the spring that bloom and
wither!
Smiling they go, with happy faces.
For there's no more death in those
vail places;
No more weeping and no more crying
For summer over and sweet things
dying.

And there the childless women waken:
The maids unloved, and the maids
forsaken;
The buds that never came to blossom;
The empty lap and the barren bosom.
For there the Lord o' th' place hath set
them
Among the babies, to kiss and pet
them.
Their hearts are light; they call to each
other;
And every one is a happy mother.

Droo Eden Garden I go straying:
All in the midst o' th' pretty playing.
And I'm lost among a world o'
children:

They pull me, they tug me, 'tis fair
bewilderin'!
Till, sudden, I hear my Janey's
laughter;
Bird alone! but a cry comes after.
Oh! my hungry arms are wide and
ready;
But she sees me first, and springs to
her Daddy!

Edward Sydney Tylee.

The Spectator.

WHEN THE GREENNESS IS COME
AGAIN.

BY THE LATE WILLIAM SHARP.

("Fiona MacLeod.")

The west wind lifts the plumes of the
fir;
The west wind swings on the pine;
In the sun and shadow the cushats stir;
For the breath of Spring is a wine
That fills the wood,
That thrills the blood,
When the glad March sun doth shine
Once more,
When the glad March sun doth shine.

When the strong May sun is a song, a
song,
A song in the good green world,
Then the little green leaves wax long
And the little fern-fronds are uncurl'd;
The banners of green are all unfurl'd,
And the wind goes marching along,
along,
The wind goes marching along
The good green world.
The Pall Mall Magazine.

RUSSIA AT THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

I am writing this paper on May 12th, two days after the opening of the first Russian Parliament. It is not immaterial to give the exact date, because just now history is proceeding at such a pace in Russia that in the interval between the writing of an article and its appearance in a magazine there may happen things by the side of which your reflections, though only a fortnight old, are likely to look stale. And yet it would be difficult to err too grossly in the general estimate of the situation. It does not require a prophet to read the signs of the time. Events have come to such a pass that they are bound to proceed for some time on lines as rigid as the metals of a railway track. Nor does it require much acuteness to notice that the heavy train carrying the destinies of a nation has not been switched on a clear way, but is rushing at increased speed on an incline where a barricade of all sorts of historical debris has been piled up. A collision is already inevitable, and it is only by clearing the road after a disaster that it will be possible to set the complex machinery of political organization going again.

This spectacle must impress on those who are witnessing it the importance of lost opportunities. We need not look back to the Middle Ages, or even to the abortive reform projects of Catherine II. and Speransky in order to see what a beneficial influence Monarchy might have exerted on the beginnings of Russian freedom. The proper moment for its introduction ought to have been the glorious epoch of Alexander II.'s reign, which laid the foundations not only of a new social order, but of self-government and of an independent judicature. The "crowning of the edifice" by a system

of national representation was contemplated in a vague manner by the Emperor himself and proposed in a definite way by members of the liberal gentry of Tver, of Moscow, and of St. Petersburg. Coming at that time, a national assembly, led by well-educated and well-to-do squires, would have presented an invaluable stepping-stone towards institutions of a more advanced type. But the Government drew back after having gone half way and left the country not only without popular representation, but even without civic rights; it preferred to safeguard the State by the help of men like Muravieff and Shuvaloff — by official terrorism and arbitrary police rule. After the sad end of the Tsar-Liberator's career, another opportunity was lost when Loris Melikoff's plan of strengthening the Council of the Empire by representatives of the Zemstvos was nipped in the bud by the policy of Alexander III. It is an open question whether this half-hearted scheme, if carried into effect, would have sufficed to conciliate public opinion and to open a real outlet for the political needs of the nation. But it would have probably helped to give a healthier turn to the national reaction against the revolutionary which set in after the murder of Alexander II. The spontaneous movement of remorse and regret was, however, only used to justify measureless repression, persecution of independent thought and self-government in every shape, hopeless attempts to reinstate to power and dignity the shattered aristocracy of the days of serfdom.

A third fatal instance of the blindness of the governing bureaucracy was given by the campaign of its foremost representatives — Witte and Plehve —

against the Zemstvos. The former trammelled the productive enterprises of the provincial self-governing bodies in favor of the unproductive expenditure of the Empire and denounced in a famous memoir all concessions to the Zemstvos as steps towards the "great imposture of our times" — constitutional government. Plehve ruthlessly suppressed all attempts of the Zemstvos to communicate with each other in order to bring some unity and co-ordination into their treatment of similar tasks and tried to prove by a series of prejudiced inquiries that the self-governing bodies mismanaged their affairs and squandered the money of the people. Triumphant bureaucracy hampered and reviled the work of men like Dm. Shipoff, whose real fault was that they actually succeeded, in spite of official obstruction, in rendering self-government a source of progress and social order.

Even when the rottenness of the whole system of Mandarin rule was revealed to the world by the Manchurian fiasco, it took some time before people became so enraged as to reject all order and government if in any way dependent on the Mandarins. At the first protest meeting of Zemstvoists in November, 1904, nothing more than a national representation on moderate lines was demanded, and the creation of a central Zemstvo in St. Petersburg would have been accepted with joy. Prince Sviatopolk-Mirsky actually advised the Emperor to grant these moderate demands. It was not to be. It is maintained that M. de Witte again gave his casting vote against Mirsky's suggestion, and another opportunity was lost: the Ukase of December 25th, 1904, appeared in a truncated shape, with a significant omission of any reference to popular representation. Thus Russian Monarchy rejected at least four times favorable opportunities for a gradual initiation of the

nation to political work. The Tsars and their Councillors did not want to have anything to do with enlightened squires, or with a modified Council of State, or with unofficial meetings of the Zemstvoists, or with a concentration of provincial self-government: no wonder they have to face now a National Assembly elected in open defiance of its wishes and policy.

When it became impossible to disregard the growing agitation and the National Duma had to be called, the bureaucracy again acted as if its chief aim were to compass its own ruin. It was brimming over with conceit in the times of capricious oppression. It showed now what it could do in the way of cynical recklessness. Enterprising officials of the younger generation set out in search of the records of sham and vitiated representative systems. Antiquated Austrian charters, the Prussian electoral law, the French Constitutions of the First and Second Empires, the survivals of bureaucracy in Sweden, were ransacked in order to concoct a Charter which might render the promised liberal institutions a mere pageant, a screen provided to conceal the shady dealings of bureaucracy. The Prussian Diet is based on a plutocratic franchise in which the political influence of the different classes of society is estimated according to the amount of their direct contributions to the Treasury; why not try in Russia to increase the electoral power of the privileged few and to cut down the franchise of the needy? The Austrian and other old-fashioned representative systems had known the device of breaking up the electors into antagonistic groups with a view to rule by division; the Russian law arranged a perfect maze of groups and grades from which the deputies of the nation had to be extricated by cumbersome processes. Napoleon the Great had adopted a distribution of the functions.

of legislation among several bodies in such a way that none of these bodies could effectually oppose the intentions of the Government; the Council of State had to elaborate the law, the Tribunate to criticize it, the Corps Législatif to accept or reject it. Something of the same kind in the way of enfeebling counterpoises may be noticed in the organic laws of August 19th and March 5th, the Duma being intended to tender advice and criticism while the actual elaboration of laws is chiefly confided to Ministers independent of the Duma. Both Napoleons appealed for a sanction of their usurped authority to the *plebiscite*, a vote of politically incapable and terrorized crowds in favor of a supposed protector and leader: how much more had the Tsar of Russia the right to expect support from the poor mujiks who had cemented his authority with their blood in the national struggles of the past? Nor were means of intimidation and corruption spared by the local authorities in order to "make" suitable elections. And last, but not least, an unwieldy Council of State composed partly of members nominated by the Crown party, of representatives of class interests and privileges was pitted against the dangerous popular assembly, while at the same time the latter was provided with a gag in the shape of the Fundamental laws published on the 16th of May. One thing was forgotten in this hunting for tricks and dodges intended to baffle the ardor of popular legislators. The absurdities of the Prussian electoral system and the sophistry of Napoleonic rule were supplemented by efficiency and success on the part of the Governments. It was not after Waterloo and Sedan that the French Empire could afford to take liberties with legislative bodies, while the feats of the Manchurian campaign and corresponding achievements at home were less likely to command ad-

miration and gratitude than the unification of Germany by Prussia.

The social policy of the Russian Government has not been distinguished by greater foresight or common sense. When the peasants were emancipated from their bonds they were left in a semi-servile condition in every other respect, and nothing was done to raise them to the legal and cultural level of the rest of the community. On the contrary, one bureaucratic Ministry after the other reaffirmed their severance from other orders and took measures to keep it up. A socialistic village community, civil disabilities of all kinds, special legal customs, class tribunals and administrative institutions make them into a State within the State. The systematic reaction of Alexander III.'s age, of which present conditions are only a feeble sequel, provided the upper caste with means for keeping the population of this conquered State in proper order; land captains (*Zemski nachalnik*) were appointed as local dictators over the rural districts, while on the remnants of the "noblesse" privileges were heaped with a view of making good their economic and social losses: cheap credit, administrative monopolies, special police protection, exceptional advantages in regard to contracts, etc. At the same time the enormous increase of Imperial expenditure and taxation, which have doubled in the course of ten years, had to be borne by somebody, and it fell naturally on the shoulders of the subject majority, numbering as it did more than eighty per cent. of the whole population of the Empire. The peasant households showed alarming symptoms of decay—a rapid decrease in the number of horses—the ploughing and carrying beasts of the village, famine breaking out every year in one or the other corner of the Empire. . . . Sooner or later a rising of the conquered natives was bound to come, and

the only wonder is that the Government should have built up all its policy on their continuing submissive for ever. Their hope of bettering their position has assumed primarily the shape of a claim of land and they are not to be deterred by the fact that the realization of this claim will involve the expropriation of all other land-owners in the Empire. The Great Russians in their village communities are accustomed to shift and re-divide the soil according to the needs and means of claimants, and as for the Little Russians, although more individualistic in their land tenure, they look upon the land of their former lords more or less in the same way as the French peasantry regarded the estates of the clergy and the *émigrés* during the great Revolution. Nor does the argument that in former days the landlord had received his estate in consideration of actual service impress the peasants in the least: the more natural does it seem to them that rights should disappear when they do not correspond any more to obligations. As for the prospective sufferings and losses of the gentry, how could they be weighed against the ages of toil and debasement through which the actual tillers of the soil have had to struggle?

But are there no conservative interests and forces in Russian society? They exist, of course, in Russia as everywhere else, but they are scattered and paralyzed for the moment. The industrials, merchants, landed proprietors are certainly conservative by the very essence of their position and calling: they represent capital and organization, they depend on social order and undisturbed intercourse. It would seem as if they ought to exert a great restraining influence on the public. But their interests and catchwords do not appeal to the people at large at a time when the cry is for redress of grievances above all things. Not to

speak of the usual antagonism between capital and labor which appears in Russian society in its sharpest form, there have been curious experiences at the last elections as to the mood of clerks, stewards, overseers and other members of the staffs of commercial and industrial organizations. The leaders of capital were confident of their ability to sweep the board by help of their numberless *employés*. As a matter of fact their dependents voted solid the "cadet" or radical ticket, because they are all dissatisfied with their lot and dreaming of a reversal of all conditions of life.

The clergy was assumed to lead the nation on the straight road of orthodoxy and to ensure obedience to the powers that be by uncontested religious discipline. The present crisis has fully demonstrated to what extent the priests have lost all social power. By accepting from Autocracy the humiliating position of Church *technovniki*, by renouncing free doctrine and active predication, the clergy have sunk to the level of performers of magical ceremonies, whose action is required for the sake of custom and appearances, but does not affect anybody's conviction or character.

The central Government itself was possessed of two great sources of strength which seemed insuperable a short while ago: the prestige of a formidable Imperial organization and a loyal army ready to quell any disturbance by its overwhelming force. The moral prestige of the Government has been hopelessly damaged by the ridiculous exhibition of the late war. To be a person in authority in Russia nowadays is a sure means of exciting opposition and attack. As for the material resources of the army, people's nerves have become obtuse in the horrors of the last months: no one seems to care for death, exile, or prison. Besides, even the hundreds of

thousands of the army will find it difficult to cope with the guerilla warfare of murder, pillage, and burglary waged against it in every corner of the immense Empire. And then, the army itself is not impermeable. Lieutenant Schmidt has not been made a hero for nothing. The halo of national sympathy bestowed on him is a direct incitement to others to act in the same way and, if possible, with better success. Even those who have spoken against an armed rising for reasons of expediency were eager to show to the army that popular admiration went not to those who remained faithful to their oath and flag, but to those who rose in rebellion against their superiors.

It is clear that the time for a conservative policy has not yet come by far. Nor is it probable that it will come before the present system has been brought down. As long as this has not been done, there will be always a scapegoat to explain blunders and disasters.

When we take these circumstances into account, we shall not be at a loss to understand the real meaning of the recent elections to the Duma. They have given command over the National Assembly to two bodies of men which, for all their differences, are equally irreconcilable in regard to the remnants of the past—the Constitutional Democrats and the peasants. The first are political Radicals, with very little consideration for acquired rights or historical traditions; they are thoroughly convinced that the best way to mend the present Government is to end it. The second start from the proposition that the one means of healing society is to give all the land to those who cultivate it. A league between the two is in course of formation. Even if some of the peasants may try to safeguard their loyalty to the person of the Tsar, the great bulk is sure to take its bearings from the

agrarian claim, and this has been thoroughly realized by all the parties concerned. The "cadets" have already endorsed in a general way the principle of wholesale expropriation for the sake of endowing the direct cultivators of the land. They would prefer a scheme of land purchase, while their allies advocate confiscation or something very much akin to it; but in any case one of the most certain results of the present movement will be the disappearance of the landlord class in Russia, while it is very doubtful whether the "fair" price offered to the expropriated will be sufficient to save them from economic ruin. And these are by no means the only revolutionary measures that have been accepted by the programmes of the leading parties of the Duma. Home Rule and even a separate political existence are demanded by all the subject nationalities of the Empire and by great divisions of the Russian nationality—the Poles, the Lithuanians, the Letts and Esths, the Georgians, the Armenians, the Ukraina Russians, and the Siberians are all asserting their national individuality and expecting "autonomous" institutions. The regulation of labor in the sense of Socialistic views has been thrown into the shade for a little while by the voluntary abstention of factory workmen from the elections, but it is sure to reappear with increased force and to be supported by most drastic methods as a natural sequel of the agrarian reform. All institutions of local government have to be recast in the mould of advanced democracy as well as the entire fabric of central government. The whole system of national education has to be changed, &c.

Surely this is not less than a complete revolution, one of those tremendous upheavals which occur in history only when a strong current of political discontent meets a powerful movement

of social or religious agitation. Mere political reforms are not likely to produce a complete reversal of former arrangements because they appeal to a rather restricted public—to those who have the education and the leisure necessary for political activity. But when sweeping political reforms are combined with the cravings of hunger or of faith they will carry multitudes which otherwise would have remained silent and passive. Such was the great Rebellion of the seventeenth century in England and the great Revolution of the eighteenth century in France, while the nineteenth-century changes in Germany were of much lesser compass, and its social transformation is still to come.

It is no contradiction of this general estimate to think that the fatal progress even of such tremendous upheavals may be regulated to a certain point and up to a certain moment by conscious agencies. Some eighteen months ago the revolution in Russia might probably have been prevented by a strong and clear-sighted Government, if it had either taken the lead in the political movement of the upper classes and conducted it into the channel prepared by the *Zemstvos*, or else if it had boldly played the game of the lower orders and overawed the intellectuals by an authority derived from great democratic reforms. But, of course, strong and clear-sighted leaders were required for either of these policies, and, if the Government had possessed them, it would not have been driven to the extremities which render heroic measures absolutely necessary. The measure of its strength and insight is to be gathered, among other things, from the woeful collapse of its most clever personality, Count Witte, who has only himself to thank for the universal distrust and disapprobation bestowed on the colleague of M. Durnovo. Nor is Goremykin likely to avert the coming

crash: his record is not better than that of Count Witte and his ability certainly less, while by his side appear such striking representatives of the old *régime* as M. Stishinsky and Prince Shikhmatoff. But, after all, these personal questions are of infinitesimal importance now. Events are moving on by their own weight, as it were, and a kind of historical fate rules the actions of the protagonists of the great drama.

Different resolutions and policies may be adopted on the surface, but the main results are not likely to be much affected by them. When the country condemned the Octobrists at the elections it declared implicitly in favor of radical programmes and revolutionary methods. The much-abused Octobrists were the only party which would have attempted to reconcile the claims of reform with national traditions and would have tried, perhaps ineffectually, to arrange a compromise with a strong Monarchy. They have been reduced in the Duma to such an insignificant number that their influence does not count for much just at present. As for the victorious "cadets," the professions of moderation made by some of them are chiefly meant to disclaim the responsibility for the use of rougher methods and to secure the choice of favorable time and place for the battle. Their programme, even in its most reduced expression, cannot be accepted by the Tsar, and the inevitable collision is likely to occur very soon. A fight is sure to ensue on the subject of amnesty, which has been made the starting-point of the discussions of the Duma. For one side there can be talk only of a pardon for offences; political murderers and mutinous soldiers will hardly be included in it. For the other side amnesty is a very imperfect term for the liberation of the foremost combatants in the struggle for freedom.

And how about the Parliamentary investigation into the crimes and misdemeanors of bureaucratic officials? Is the Emperor to withdraw his protection from men who acted by his command and some of whom have been expressly praised and rewarded for their acts? How about the abrogation of the ordinances of the 5th of March? How about the Constitutional position of the Upper House? How about the political responsibility of Ministers? How about the Fundamental Laws? Indeed, there is not a single question within the range of conceivable politics that will not call for a conflict between the forces of tradition and those of revolution.

One of two courses may be adopted by the Tsar. He will either make a stand from the very first against the Duma majority on one or the other of the vital questions raised, or else he will try to pacify the Assembly by sweeping concessions. The ultimate result is not likely to vary in either of these eventualities. Matters will come to a head more rapidly in the first case, while the main decision may be staved off for some time in the latter. But there is sure to be a breach in the end, nor is it improbable that the crucial question of the disposal of the Army may come to play a decisive part in bringing about a struggle. The leadership of this force the Sovereign cannot give up without surrendering himself, and, on the other hand, the Assembly would be ever haunted by apprehensions in regard to such a force even in the case of the widest concessions. The compromises effected in this respect in Germany and Italy are mainly the products of the great services rendered by the monarchical power in both States in the military history of the two nations. Already in Austria-Hungary the case is different. As for Russia, the best solution—a frankly monarchical army organization with an

effective control of the financial side of it by the representatives of the nation—is rendered extremely difficult by the mutual distrust of the powers concerned and by the lamentable inefficiency of the Imperial rule in the Army.

Perhaps the most ominous aspect of the present situation consists not in the facts themselves, but in the feelings. The points at issue could possibly be arranged by a round-table conference between level-headed men. But the leading personalities who have looked into each other's eyes in the Tauris palace have been brought up in hatred and contempt for each other: those who have now the upper hand have suffered so long and so much in the past that they are unable to recognize the relative rights and the conscientious objections of their opponents. A final trial of strength must come before Russia is allowed to proceed on its further course.

Far be it from us to assume that the adoption of the radical programme presents the desirable solution of the crisis, but in one way or another it will mark a stage in it. This stage of a rather crude importation of principles supplied by French democracy, American federalism and German socialism is necessary in order to get rid of the mischievous absurdities of the old *régime*. But bye and bye the Russian nation will realize, as other nations have done before, that living organization cannot transform bones and sinews at pleasure, that the future has deeper roots in the past than the present is inclined to grant, that, as the Emperor very properly said the other day, there are blessings of order as well as of liberty, that public authority and public force cannot be dispensed with, least of all in periods of violent social unrest, that Russia cannot give way before the aspirations of all the nationalities composing it without

ceasing to be Russia. It is by object-lessons that the people will be taught on all these points, and one may fear almost that these lessons will come, not in the shape of painful yet consecutive experiments, but in that of a downfall of the immense social fabric raised by the efforts of so many gener-

The Fortnightly Review.

ations. It would be rash to prophesy on the work of reconstruction: let us hope that it may be achieved by statesmen capable of conceiving lofty ideals and of realizing the matter-of-fact conditions with which all builders have to reckon.

Paul Vinogradoff.

THE NEW POWER IN POLITICS.

The recent General Election has brought into public prominence the existence in Great Britain of a third political party.

The surprise and shock which the return of thirty independent Labor members to Parliament has given to the press, to the public, and to the ordinary politicians is evidence of how unconscious these have been of a great living movement working among the people during the last fifteen years.

The Labor Party is not a new birth; it is not a whim of novelty which has suddenly seized hold of the imaginations of the artisans in our populous centres of industry. The Labor victories at the General Election were the natural outcome of years of preparatory work, and the ideas and aspirations which this political action expresses have filled the hearts and minds of the workers as the result of long and intelligent study of the problem of their industrial and social condition.

This assertion by the working class of a right to directly participate in national legislation is not a political feature confined to this country. Indeed the workers of Great Britain have in this matter been lagging behind practically every other industrial country in the world. Australia has its Parliamentary Labor Party, so strong in numbers as to hold Governments in the hollow of its hand. Every conti-

nental country, with but two or three exceptions has a strong Socialist representation in its legislature. The Labor Party in Britain is the counterpart of the working class political parties in these other lands; the British Labor Party has been forced into existence by the same causes, to deal with the similar conditions; though it has assumed a form and adopted tactics suitable for the special circumstances, or in conformity with the traditions, of our own country.

The contemporary world-wide character of the Labor movement is a fact sufficiently impressive of itself to demand the attention of all politicians and social students. No movement which was merely the creation of the dreams or ambitions of agitators could have attained such dimensions, have shown such progressive vitality, or have arisen almost contemporaneously in every industrial nation. There must be deep and abiding causes for such a movement, and these causes must be common to the industrial and social life of the workers of all countries.

There has always been a social problem; and the Labor movement of this age has come into being to deal with this eternal problem as it manifests itself and affects the lives of the people to-day.

All great political reforms of the past have been for the emancipation of

a class. The real motive in political agitation has been to secure economic benefit through political freedom. The barons overthrew the political autocracy of the crown, and established in its place their own rule of the people. They maintained their authority through nearly five centuries chiefly because they owned the land, which enabled them to exercise a power over the people which the possession of no political power divorced from economic control could confer.

The industrial development of this country, through the use of steam power and machinery, gave rise to a new class, controlling industrial conditions, but without political power. This new class soon realized that the two possessions, political and economic power, must be theirs if full advantage of the possession of one was to be reaped. So we had the fifty years of political agitation culminating in the Reform Act of 1832 by which the political monopoly of the autocracy was broken; the commercial classes coming thereby into the joint exercise of it.

Successive extensions of the franchise, reluctantly conceded to popular agitation, have given political power to the working class. The barons used their political enfranchisement to constitute themselves the dominating economic class. The commercial class agitated for political power to aid the economic monopoly of manufacturing which success in competition had given to them. The working class has been slow to learn the historic lesson; but the political awakening of Labor means that we are once again in the political class struggle for economic freedom; it means that at last the workers have learnt the old lesson that political and economic freedom are complements; that both must be in the possession of a class if it is to be free from the domination of another class.

The meaning then of the coming of

this new power into British politics is that we are entering in grim earnest upon the last great struggle against class domination and the class ownership of the means of life. The success of the commercial class in its struggle with the aristocracy did not result in the supersession of the aristocracy by the plutocracy, but in giving the plutocracy joint political and economic power with the aristocracy. Together they completely controlled the land and wealth-producing means and the political power of the country. In like manner the inevitable success of the present class struggle will not be to deprive any class of political power or of its proportionate share in economic control; but the result of success will be to bring all classes into the joint and equal participation of political power with the object of thereby securing joint and equitable control of economic resources and conditions.

This result will be the abolition of all artificial classes, for where there is complete political equality, and politics is used to ensure the conditions and opportunities of economic equality, no classes can exist.

This is the significance of the Labor movement in Britain. It is the meaning of the working class movement throughout the world, whether the movement take, as in France and Germany, the form of revolutionary Socialism; or, as in Australia, the character of a practical non-doctrinaire working class reform movement; or, as in Britain, a combination of the two, bringing the idealism of Socialism to stimulate reform on lines which necessity has already compelled us to slowly move.

The statement given of the ultimate purpose of the Labor movement will serve to explain the composition of the Labor Party and the reasons for the programme the party puts forward.

The political organization which was

responsible for the fifty-two Labor candidates at the recent General Election is a federation of Socialist and Trade Union Societies. In its present form the Labor Party is young in years, though the constituent bodies are all of considerable age. The history and the struggles of trade unionism are well enough known not to require description. The Socialist bodies, which are parts of the united Labor Party, are the Independent Labor Party and the Fabian Society.

The Fabian Society was established nearly twenty years ago, and its special function has been to propagate Socialism through its publications and lectures. It has never sought to become a body strong in numbers, aiming rather at quality than at quantity in its membership. It has never been a distinct political party, and has never, as an organization, taken any action in promoting candidatures for the municipality or for Parliament. In the early years of its existence it did a great and fruitful work by its lectures and the publication of tracts. But with the uprising of more militant socialist organizations, the Fabian Society fell away from active participation in the work of creating Socialist opinion, and for the last few years it has given no justification by works for its continued existence.

It was doubtless by way of compliment to the Fabian Society for its work in former years that an invitation was given to it to join the federation of Trade Union and Socialist bodies, when this union was formed six years ago.

The only other distinctly Socialist body inside the Labor Party is the Independent Labor Party. This society has been the motive power of the movement for Labor representation and the unceasing propagandist for Socialism since its formation over thirteen years ago. Though constituting but a very small proportion of the total mem-

bership of the united Labor Party, the Independent Labor Party, by its exclusive character as a propagandist body for Labor representation and Socialism, exerts an influence in the movement, and figures in the public view, quite disproportionately to its numbers.

The I.L.P. (as the Independent Labor Party is generally called) has over 400 branches in Great Britain with a membership of something like 30,000. Each branch of the I.L.P. is an active centre of political work and education. As a rule a branch will hold public meetings every week the whole year round, taking advantage of the summer weather to carry its message into the open market-places and streets. The keenest interest is shown by these branches in local affairs; and, in large numbers, candidates are put forward at the recurring elections to represent the Socialist principles of the party.

The victories of the Labor Party at the General Election would have given no surprise to any one who had followed the local Government elections during recent years. An increasing measure of success has attended the efforts of the I.L.P. in each of the last five years, culminating last November in giving the party a larger number of gains than fell to any other party. It can be readily imagined that the effect of unceasing education in politics and social reform, carried to the working people by working people themselves and presented to them in a way to be understood, must sooner or later make an impression on working-class thought and opinion.

The I.L.P. has developed unexpected capacity for popular exposition in large numbers of working men and women. The speeches of the working-class speakers at the Labor and Socialist meetings are not the vehement, iconoclastic, ignorant ravings which one unacquainted with the movement might

Imagine. The men and women of the I.L.P. have a knowledge of political history, an acquaintance with economic theories, and an understanding of social questions which enable them to throw a flood of daylight on the dark problems of our industrial and social conditions, and which compel admiration where they do not go so far as to carry conviction.

This is the character of the body which is the fighting front of the United Labor Party. Its policy of political independence is the policy of the whole party; its ultimate aim of Socialism is the declared ultimate aim of the united movement.

But it would not be true to convey the impression that the entire Labor Party is as decided in its adhesion to Socialism as the members of the I.L.P. The Trade Union section of the Labor Party—in numbers enormously preponderating—is at present undergoing development; but the development is towards Socialism. The most active of the Trade Union leaders are Socialists, and their influence has brought forward the rank and file of the trade unionists at a rate rather more rapid than was conducive to clear vision in some cases.

Experience too has helped the evolution of trade unionism into a political party. In spite of all that trade unionism has done to improve the lot of the workers, their condition still remains far from satisfactory; and it has been forced upon the trade unionists that, useful and necessary as trade unionism is within its limitations, there are questions of wages, conditions, and employment which voluntary trade unionism apart from politics cannot settle. The recent decisions of the law courts inimical to trade unionism have done much to strengthen the conviction that trade unionists must not leave the law making to employers, and expect legislation to do justice to the workers.

This is the constitution and character of the Labor Party which is now represented in Parliament by a solid thirty members. It is quite sufficiently conscious of its mission to do its work in a coherent and consistent way, though further experience and knowledge will promote its development of ideas, but certainly will not change them.

Its purpose is, as has been stated, to achieve complete political and economic freedom for all. This purpose involves the completion of the work of political reform. The party stands, therefore, for the vote for every adult man and woman, and for such machinery for giving effect to political opinion as will put every citizen on a level of equality.

The subjection of sex, politically or economically, is as unjust and immoral as the political or economic subjection of class to class. The oppression which men bear, the wrongs they suffer, afflict women to an equal and often to a greater extent. The Labor Party would indeed be unfitted to enjoy its own freedom if it were not prepared to fight for and to give equal freedom to all, the women included.

To ensure practical political equality the State must provide the means by which every citizen can express his political opinions, and the means by which every capable citizen may occupy any legislative or administrative position to which a majority might wish to call him. The political system should be such that the possession of personal means will carry no political advantage. To carry this principle into effect involves the payment of election expenses, and the payment of members of Parliament.

But the fullest measure of political enfranchisement will, of itself, do nothing to better the conditions of life. It is a means only, but an essential means.

The Labor Party will use political

power to secure economic and social freedom.

What is this desired economic and social freedom? Does not such freedom obtain for everybody now? No. There is no real freedom for the workers to-day. When land and machinery are the private property of a few; when the millions of landless and propertyless must beg permission to use this private property to get their daily bread, and submit to the conditions which it may please the whim of the owner to dictate, there can be no freedom for the worker. He has, it is true, the alternative to refuse—and to starve.

The landowner to-day, by virtue of his possession of what others must use, has powers no less autocratic than those of the feudal lord, because they are exercised in a different way. The landowner takes in rent to-day what the baron took in feudal service. The community exerts its labor; the municipality spends its rates to make its sites of public utility; and the landowner scoops in the added value in form of an increased rent.

The Labor Party indicts no individual. It is not the landowner, but the land system, which is indicted. Land is a common necessary. The private appropriation of a common necessary must inevitably carry with the appropriation, not only the poverty of the expropriated, but the subjection of the expropriated to the possessor. Land monopoly involves both economic and social subjection. Economic subjection it involves because it enables the landowner to dictate the economic terms of use with all the advantage of the bargain on his side, and in actual practice it gives to the landowner the social increment of value to which he himself has contributed nothing. Land monopoly involves social subjection because of the powers of the landowner, whether used or not matters not at all, to interfere with the social activity

and personal inclination of the non-landowner.

The same statements apply to the private ownership of other forms of wealth upon which the workers must exercise their labor to live. The powers of a capitalist, or of capitalism in the aggregate, are not less than those of the landowners. They dictate wages and conditions, they have the power to tell the workman to do or to go. He has the liberty to leave one master, to seek another who can exercise the same authority and power. As in the case of the landowner, capitalism reaps the benefit of increased wealth-producing power arising from the advance of mechanical and scientific knowledge; leaving the remuneration of the helpless worker at a figure fixed, not by the value of his product, but by the necessities of his unemployed fellows clamoring for his job.

This economic subjection of the workers is manifested in their poverty, and in the wealth of the classes owning the land and productive means. In spite of all the marvellous increase in our collective power to produce the necessities of life, the words of John Stuart Mill remain true, namely, that "it is doubtful if all our labor-saving machinery has lightened the day's toll of a single worker," and it may with certainty be added that there never were a larger number of people in this country (though the proportion to the population may possibly be less) in a condition of poverty and want than there are to-day. The official returns of national income report year after year tens of millions increased income assessed to taxation. And the pauper returns report increases too. Six estates have just been valued for duty at ten millions; the paupers in Great Britain would form a procession four abreast one hundred miles long.

The Labor Party attribute these extremes of poverty and riches to the

economic power of land and capital in private ownership.

The ultimate aim of the party is to transfer the land and the means of production to common ownership and public management. This it is not proposed to do by any sudden or comprehensive act, nor by the forcible expropriation of the present owners. We have put the principle, Socialists would further apply, into practice to a sufficient extent to show the practicability of the method and the public advantage of the system. The public ownership of public services, such as tramways and the supply of gas, electric power, etc., are illustrations of collectivism, of the substitution of public service for private profit; though the possibilities of general collectivism cannot be fairly judged from isolated instances of public ownership while the land and the means of production remain in private hands.

It is a principle by no means accepted by Socialists alone, that when a public service is of the nature of a monopoly that service should be under public control. To accept this principle and to be prepared to apply it as fast as the occasion demands it, will keep one busily employed in bringing nearer the ultimate aim of the Labor and Socialist Party. All industry is rapidly progressing towards the monopoly form, and this tendency will finally bring us to a stage where there will be no alternative but to put all public services under public ownership and control.

Meanwhile there is plenty of work on the lines indicated which waits atten-

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tion. The land question must be treated on the lines of conferring large powers on local authorities to buy land and to use it for public needs. By taxation reform some plan might be carried out which would put all future "unearned increment" of land into the public exchequer. The railways and the mines are in a state of organization quite suitable for nationalization. The savings resulting from the amalgamation of management would provide a sinking fund which in a generation would pay off the cost of acquisition.

Simultaneously with the extension of public ownership, a democratic party would use the powers of national taxation to redress economic injustices. A heavily graduated income tax, differentiating between earned and unearned incomes, and a cumulative tax on estates, would provide the means for Old Age Pensions, Better Education, and other reform schemes. The abstraction of a considerable part of the large incomes of the very rich might lessen the number of well-fed and luxuriously clothed pug-dogs; but the Labor Party think that the use of the wealth consumed now in that way would add to the sum of social happiness if spent on feeding starving children and in pensioning aged workers.

This then is the aim of the Labor Party—the ultimate abolition of poverty; the establishment of a state in which there will be no poor because there are no rich; for in very truth John Ruskin was right when he said "the art of being rich is the art of keeping your neighbor poor."

Philip Snowden, M.P.

THE CLERGY AND THE CHURCH.

In the last number of this Review¹ there appeared a somewhat remarkable article on "The Parson and His Flock," with regard to which a few words may be permitted from one who for over forty years has been working, as a clergyman of the Church of England, both in town and in country parishes. The writer of the article calls upon the clergy, as I understand him, to descend from a certain social elevation which the writer calls the "plateau" to a lower social position which he calls the "plain." The writer complains that the clergy are too genteel (to use an unpleasant word), too conscious of their social position, too refined, too polished, and that for this reason they have failed to win the hearts, and to influence the lives, of the laboring classes.

The writer asks the clergy to descend from their pedestal and to live among the working classes as their social equals. To this end he suggests: Firstly, that in some cases the clergy should choose their wives from the daughters of working men; secondly, that the clergy should bring up their sons to follow manual labor; and, thirdly, that their daughters should go out to domestic service. If this were done, the writer believes that the country at large would receive an unspeakable benefit, and that the Church of England would hold so firm a place in the affections of the people that it would defy all efforts to destroy its position or to interfere with its welfare. This seems to the present writer a perfectly fair interpretation of the views of the author of the article. He thinks that there is too much "starch" amongst the clergy of the Church of England, and that, on this account, the clergy do not make way amongst the working

classes. Let the "starch" disappear, and a change would come over the present state of things.

It may be desirable to offer a few observations on these statements. In the first place it may be questioned whether the clergy, or at any rate the majority of them, are, socially and personally, as unbending and as unconciliatory as the writer seems to think. After many years of personal acquaintance with the clergy both of town and country, the present writer boldly avers that the clergy, as a rule, are accustomed to treat all classes of their parishioners, rich and poor, with the utmost friendliness and the utmost cordiality. The present writer knows of instances where a clergyman has helped a poor parishioner to light her fire, where he has been seen to carry a pail of water for another, and where, in a crowded street of a fashionable town, another clergyman has been seen to greet his humble parishioners, poor and ill-clothed, with a friendly grasp of the hand. This does not look much like "starch." It is, again, well known that in purely agricultural parishes the clergymen and the laboring classes live, in most cases, on the most friendly and cordial terms. When trouble comes to a working man, he goes first to the rectory or the vicarage for advice and for help. When the wife of the agricultural laborer wants to send her daughter to service, she naturally goes to the vicar's wife, and, as naturally, the vicar's wife interests herself in the matter, and in nine cases out of ten finds a fitting situation for the girl. There are, I repeat, the most friendly and cordial feelings between the clergy and the laborers in most country parishes. Of course, there are exceptions to every rule. And, here and

¹ *The Living Age*, June 16.

there, no doubt there may be found a want of friendliness between the vicarage and the parish, sometimes owing to a culpable want of sympathy on the part of the dwellers in the vicarage, sometimes owing to wrong-headed opinions on the part of the parishioners. As a rule, the working man's best friends are the vicar and his family, and this is a fact which the working man will be the first to admit. Thousands of young men and thousands of young women have made their first start in life owing to the friendly exertions of the country vicar and his wife or daughters.

Then, secondly, it must not be forgotten that the laboring classes are not the only classes to whom the clergy are called upon to minister in spiritual things. Every person in the parish, no matter what his position, can call upon the parson for sympathy and help, and even in a country parish a clergyman may have parishioners, for whose welfare he is responsible, of every sort of position. He may have two or three hundred cottagers, more or less poor and illiterate; he may have also a Member of Parliament and his family, or a Peer of the Realm with a large and costly establishment, or a wealthy manufacturer, or a cultivated and intellectual professional man, perhaps a barrister, or a doctor; besides this, he may have three or four farmers, men of intelligence and acuteness, and three or four tradesmen, all of whom look upon the clergyman of the parish as, in some degree, belonging to them, and therefore bound to give them, when needed, his help. Now in such a parish as this, with a sprinkling of all sorts of people, how would it work if the clergyman had married a daughter of Jack Brown, the ploughman, and if his children were, some of them, working for Mr. Jones, the farmer, and some were housemaids or cooks? Would such a man retain the

influence in the parish which the parish priest ought to possess? Would the M.P. and his wife and daughters, would the manufacturer and his belongings, would even the laborers themselves, be inclined to be influenced by a clergyman whose wife was the daughter of one of the laborers? One knows pretty well what their feelings would be, and what their talk would be: "Why should us listen to she?" "Us knows all about her; her brothers and her sisters are not so very first rate, why should she try to teach we?" The idea is preposterous. The result would be chaos and confusion. The clergyman and his wife, chosen from the family of the ploughman, would be, in that parish at least, a complete and utter failure. She would be in a most uncomfortable position, when meeting the family of the M.P. or the peer; she would be almost equally uncomfortable when she met the farmer who was employing her sons on his farm, or the lady in the next parish whose dinners were cooked by her daughter.

Thirdly, the real fact is that the working classes are exceedingly keen to recognize the manners and the feelings of a gentleman; and it is also a fact that they greatly prefer the ministrations of a gentleman, to the ministrations of a man of unrefined habits, both in speech and manners. Years ago the great Bishop of Oxford, Samuel Wilberforce, declared on the authority of Dr. Hook, the well-known and successful vicar of Leeds, who was so greatly beloved by the working classes of that populous town, that the working classes make no secret of the fact that they prefer the ministrations of a gentleman, rather than of an unrefined man of the people. They know well enough the difference between the two classes of men, and they infinitely prefer the gentleman to the non-gentleman. Here and there, no doubt, you may find a

man who has risen from the working classes and who has been ordained, who by his earnestness and warm-heartedness makes friends wherever he goes; but this is not always the case. And there are instances where clergymen who have risen from a humble position have shown themselves unworthy of their advancement, and have given plain indications of pride, conceit and self-seeking, such as would be condemned in any class of life.

Fourthly, it may be confidently asserted that at the present time the clergy are in every part of England gaining immense influence among the working classes. One need only refer to the splendid work which the present Bishop of London has done and is doing, by means of the Oxford House, in the East End of London. There is not much "starch" in the Bishop of London. Nor is there much of that stiffening and disagreeable article to be seen in the men whom he gathers round him in the East of London. The clergy in these parts, though they do not, as a rule, marry the daughters of costermongers or dock-laborers, seem to win, in a very remarkable manner, the respect and the affection of those amongst whom they labor. But not only is this true of the East of London; it is true also of hundreds of parishes, in all parts of England. A very remarkable movement is taking place, which is welding together all sorts and conditions of men in the Church of England. The "Church of England Men's Society" is doing a great work, and seems to meet a great want. In all parts of the country branches of this society have been established under the auspices of the clergy, and at this moment splendid work is being done by its members. There are no less than 350 branches of this society in various parts of the country. All the members must be communicants; and all sorts of people are admitted: carpenters, black-

smiths, artisans of all kinds, besides professional men—doctors, lawyers and so on. The work which these branches are doing is to bring together rich and poor, as members of the Church of England, and to help forward the special services for men which are now so common. Thus the C.E.M.S. seeks to gather together for these services those working men who, as a rule, attend no place of worship. That their efforts are fairly successful the following figures seem to prove. We read of these special services for men being attended, some by 200 men and others by 600 or 800; while the total number of members of the C.E.M.S. has reached 15,000, though the society has only been started for six years. These are facts, facts easily proved; and they prove, at any rate, that the working men all over the country are taking a large share in the practical work of the Church, and are not repelled by the alleged "starchiness" of the parochial clergy.

In conclusion, the writer of this article has been very anxious to avoid any bitterness or unkindness in the few remarks which he has made. He believes that his brother clergy of the Church of England have been most unfairly attacked in the article to which he now replies; he claims for them that they are doing their work, often disappointing and difficult, in a kind, conciliatory and Christian spirit. English working men are not always easy to deal with. They are sometimes suspicious, and sometimes ungrateful. On the other hand, many of them are helpful to the clergy, loyal to the Church, and full of enthusiasm for what is good and true. Hundreds of working men would, I feel sure, defend the clergy from all imputation of "starchiness" or want of friendliness; hundreds of them, both in town and country, would be glad to stand up in defence of their parson, and would freely confess that

without his kindly sympathy and warm friendship their difficulties, spiritual and temporal, would be ten times worse than they are at present. The clergy need the support of the working-classes; the working-classes need the sympathy

and help of the clergy; and we may, indeed, be thankful that, as time goes on, prejudice and distrust are fading away and mutual consideration and mutual sympathy are taking their place.

E. Vine Hall.

The Contemporary Review.

WILD WHEAT.

BY M. E. FRANCIS (MRS. FRANCIS BLUNDELL). AUTHOR OF "LYNGATE HALL," ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

KEEPER HOUNSELL.

In the middle of that night there was an alarm of poachers, and Peter, roused from a sound sleep by Mr. Meadway's excited tones, dressed hastily and joined him in the living-room.

The keeper's face wore an expression of righteous wrath tempered with exultation. "We are pretty sure to catch the rascals now, we be!" he cried. "You bain't very slack, and I'm a very good warrant myself to run 'em down if we can get anyways near them."

Peter was infected by his enthusiasm, and set forth on the adventure tingling in every limb. He was a true sportsman, and had ever found the chase of bird or beast exhilarating enough; but as he sped through the moonlit woods, with his ears pricked, as it were, and his eyes strained to detect the shadowy form of his quarry, he owned that no chase in the world was so exciting as the pursuit of man. The primary instinct of destructiveness awoke within him; his fingers closed fiercely on the stout stick with which, by his leader's instructions, he had provided himself. Had he come up with the supposed gang of poachers he would have worked havoc among them. But though he and Keeper Meadway scoured the coverts till day-break, causing many a startled pheas-

ant to fly skyward with a crow of warning that would have informed any wary intruder of their whereabouts, and sending rabbits innumerable scuttling into the underwood, the trespassers, if such there were, escaped their pursuit.

Yet, abortive as the chase had been, Peter often looked back to it, recalling the flapping of the dewy leaves in his face, the mystery surrounding the tangle of trees in the moonlight; the cries of the wild things; the very sound of his own footsteps as they fell muffled in the night; above all, the queer, unlooked-for eagerness which had suddenly awakened within himself—eagerness which was almost savagery, and yet held within it an element of delight.

It was broad daylight when they returned to the cottage, and Peter went straight up to his room to remedy the disorder of his perfunctory toilet. Prue's door was open, and he saw that her little chamber was already in perfect order, and that in the middle of the bed the doll lay outstretched, carefully covered with its owner's little red shawl. He smiled to himself as he entered his own room, which was also a picture of neatness, the bed made, and a jug of hot water awaiting him on the washstand.

Prue was alone in the kitchen when he descended. After a word of greet-

ing he began to take her to task for not suffering him to wait upon himself.

"I like to do for you," said Prue. "I like you to have things that you are used to."

"How shall I repay you?" he resumed, laughingly. "Shall I get you a new hat for your doll?"

Prue blushed. "I washed Nancy's frock to-day," she explained hastily. "I can't let her things be dirty."

"And you thought she might be cold without one?" suggested Peter.

"Well, then, what matter if I did?" returned she defiantly. "Poor old Nancy! I had many a happy day with her when I was a child. I'm not going to neglect her now."

"I think you ought to take her up some breakfast," said Peter.

Prue tossed her head without replying, and crossing the room with a dignified air, called to her mother that breakfast was ready; then, returning to the table, and sitting down, resting her elbows upon it and her chin on her hands, she leaned forward, gazing earnestly at Peter.

"Why do you look at me like that, child?" he asked.

"I am not a child; I am seventeen," said Prue, in a low voice. "I can understand things and feel things—and I can keep a secret."

"You queer little thing!" remarked Peter, returning her gaze curiously. The girl spoke with real emotion, and there was a depth of meaning in her gaze which he could not read; but as the keeper and his wife entered at that moment he was unable to pursue the conversation.

At seven o'clock he betook himself to the beech-tree, but, though he waited long, Nathalie did not appear. It was true she had warned him that it might not be possible for her to come every day, but still on *that* day she might have made an effort to see him.

As he stood propped against the tree,

chafing inwardly and tapping an impatient foot, he heard a rustle in the bushes a few paces away from him, and, turning round, saw Prue's small figure emerging from them. She paused, hesitating.

"It must be nearly supper-time," she remarked, as he did not speak.

"Yes, I should think so. You had better make haste home."

Then, as she still stood looking at him questioningly, he added, with a burst of irritation:

"What are you doing, poking and prying about here? You seem a very curious little girl."

Without a word Prue turned and flew; but not before he had noted the expression of her face. He recalled it afterwards more than once; it had a surprised, pained look, such as a child's might wear which, seeking for a caress, received a blow.

Poor little maid! She meant no harm, he said to himself; and, with a sigh, he prepared to follow her.

On entering the keeper's cottage he found the Rector installed in the best arm-chair. The good man's back was turned to the door, and Peter's entrance was at first unperceived by him; indeed, from his somewhat constrained attitude and the weary poise of his head, it would seem that he found it a sufficiently difficult task to cope with Mrs. Meadway's flow of eloquence.

"'Tis a very good man in his way," the keeper's wife was saying, "and religious in's heart, but not what a body m'd call an example, sir. Meadway—he do feel right enough, but he be a terrible one for hidin' his light under a bush, Mr. Bunning—he be, An' I'm sure it bain't for the want o' tellin'. There, from marnin' to night I do be a-tryin' to speak the word in season—I do indeed. I do do it reg'lar. Only last night when the scare come about the poachers, an' he was a-dressin' of hisself so quick as he could, I did say to en: 'Meadway,'

I did say, 'the foxes have a-got their holes and the birds of the air have a-got their nesses. You did ought to be glad you've a-got a bed to lay on, Meadway,'—I says."

A tremor seemed to pass through the Rector's frame.

"And your husband, no doubt, was as grateful as he ought to be?" he remarked.

"Well, no; I cant say as he was, sir," admitted Mrs. Meadway, sorrowfully. "There, he did say words as 'ud fair shock ye if I was to repeat 'em; but he don't mean no harm, sir. 'Tis the want o' knowledge—'tis the want o' knowledge an' not malice, an' I bairn't discouraged. When he did come back this mornin' I were ready for 'en. Says I: 'Meadway,' I says, 'ye've labored all the night, Meadway,' I says, 'an' caught nothin'; but there,' I says, 'sit down to your breakfast; man doesn't live by bread alone'—didn't I, Mr. Hounsell?"

The Rector turned round sharply before Peter could reply.

"I want a word with you," he said. "I have come on purpose to see you, Peter. Come outside with me for a moment."

Peter stepped back to let him pass, and followed him beyond the little garden into the wood. He had known very well that Mr. Bunning's visit was intended for him, and, had he not felt that it would be cowardly to shirk the impending interview, he would have withdrawn before the conclusion of Mrs. Meadway's tirade. As it was, he faced his old friend with evident reluctance.

The Rector, a spare man of about fifty, with a face at once clever and kindly, gazed at him for a moment without speaking, and then, bringing down his hand sharply on the young man's shoulder, inquired:

"Are you stark, staring mad, Peter?"

"Every one asks me the same ques-

tion," responded Peter, with a somewhat bitter smile. "No; I am sane enough. I am acting with full deliberation."

"But why?" persisted the other. "What is your reason? I have known you ever since you were born, and I don't for one moment share the belief of your people at home. It was not because you quarrelled with Godfrey that you have taken this step; you would not stoop to anything so mean as to retaliate for the blow to your own pride by wounding theirs. Even your mother believes this of you, Peter; but I do not."

"Thank you," said Peter.

"There were a thousand ways open to you in which you could have gained an honest living," went on Mr. Bunning. "Why should you choose this?"

"I can't tell you," returned Peter.

"You mean you won't."

"Well, I suppose I do."

"I am hurt," said the Rector; "grieved to the heart's core. I used to be so proud of you—you were so full of promise. I expected great things of you, and now you have sunk to this; you have lowered yourself to the level of a peasant—a mere clod. Your presence in this neighborhood in your actual capacity is an insult to your family; and now I tell you it is an insult to me, your old friend and master, your painstaking teacher. I feel outraged—outraged, I tell you, Peter!"

The Rector's fine, pale face had become suffused with red, his voice shook, his eyes positively flashed. Peter had never seen him thus moved.

His own voice was sharp with anger and pain as he broke out in reply:

"Oh, why can't you leave me alone? What does it matter to any one what I do with my own life? Forget your promising pupil, sir—forget Peter Hounsell. I do not exist for my own mother—I needn't exist for you. I am, as you say, a mere clod—leave it at that."

He turned away, striding towards the garden gate. After a moment's hesitation the Rector followed him.

"Forgive me, Peter!" he exclaimed. "I—I was carried away. I—My dear boy, nothing can never alter my affection for you. To me you will always be Peter, my favorite pupil. I—I hope you will always look on me as your friend. If at any time you feel inclined to give me your confidence you may depend that it shall be kept inviolate."

Peter strode on without turning his head. Had he looked round he might have given way to the emotion which was suffocating him; the sob which he was choking down might have burst from him. He flung open the gate and passed up the path with unseeing eyes, almost knocking over Prue, who at that moment ran to the door.

The Rector stood looking after him, his hand upon the gate, but without seeking to enter.

"I don't understand," he said, unconsciously speaking aloud in his distress; "I don't understand."

Peter made but a poor supper, as Mrs. Meadway remarked more than once, and was glad when the meal was over. As he stood smoking his pipe gloomily in the little yard, Prue stole up to him.

"Mr. Hounsell, I must tell you something."

He glanced at her; her face looked pale, her eyes unnaturally large and dark. She seemed actuated by a strong desire to speak, and an equally strong fear of giving him offence.

"Well, what's the matter?" he said kindly, but a little impatiently too.

"I told you this morning I could keep a secret," resumed Prue timidly. "I wasn't quite sure then, but I'm sure now. It's your secret, Mr. Hounsell. I know why you have left home, and why you want to live here in the wood with us."

"Do you, indeed?" said Peter, stiffening ominously.

"Don't be angry!" pleaded the little creature, throwing out a deprecating hand. "I didn't want to pry—I didn't. Indeed. You see it was this way. When you were out so long in the night, I knew you'd never go to bed again, and so I thought I'd straighten up your room against you came back, and under your pillow I found—this."

Thrusting her hand into her bosom she drew forth Nathalie's handkerchief and held it towards him. Peter, with rising color, took it quickly from her.

"I couldn't help seeing the name," explained the girl penitently. "I've been carrying it about all day because I was afraid mother might find it. Mother looks about her a good bit sometimes, when she's dusting. She found a letter of Jim Bridle's once—"

She paused, pursing up her lips.

Peter's face relaxed, but he did not speak. He had, indeed, observed the lively interest evinced by Mrs. Meadway in her neighbors' concerns, and on this account he usually carried Nathalie's handkerchief about his person. In the hurry of the night alarm he had forgotten this precaution, and, oddly enough, throughout that day had not recalled the necessity for it.

"And just now," resumed Prue, "when I heard Parson say he couldn't understand you, I felt all in a minute that I understood, and I thought I ought to tell you. It didn't seem honest not to tell you. But I promise faithful, Mr. Hounsell, it shall never pass my lips—never!"

Peter smiled outright; and, encouraged by his friendly look, the girl went on eagerly:

"Oh, I do think it's such a wonderful thing to do—I do admire you for it. 'Tis just what a man would do in a story. And she's just like a story—she's like a fairy princess. I watch sometimes for quite a long time to see

her go by. She's such a beautiful lady—so beautiful every way. Oh, I'm so glad you did it, Mr. Hounsell. How proud she must be that you should give up so much for her sake!"

An almost imperceptible cloud overspread Peter's face; but presently his brow cleared.

"I think she must like me a little for doing it, Prue," he said; "don't you?"

"Like you a little!" she repeated, clasping her hands ecstatically. "She must feel that she can never love you enough for it. If a man did that for me I should want to lie down and die for him. But no one will ever love me like that," she added sorrowfully.

"Why not?" queried Peter, interested and amused. He had never seen such a speaking face as the face of this little brown maid.

"Folks like us never fall in love that way," she explained; "'tis only among gentry, I do 'low, and in books. With us, you know, 'tisn't the same. A man mostly picks up the maid what's nearest at hand. There's Jim Bridle—he used to walk with Eliza Maidment; but when he went away he said he'd have to look out for another sweetheart."

Longman's Magazine.

(*To be continued.*)

Peter laughed; and Prue went on, after ruminating for a moment:

"And father, he was courtin' my Aunt Jane until she was took with the rheumatic fever, and then he left her for mother, because he said he was afraid she might have it again, and then he'd have to look after her instead of her lookin' after him."

"I see," said Peter.

He knew she spoke the truth. In her class of life propinquity and convenience actuate most men in their choice of a helpmate; and the girls are often enough led by the same motives.

"All the same," resumed Prue, "as I told you this morning, I can understand things, and I—I know all you are feeling, Mr. Hounsell, and I'll try and help you every way I can."

"Thank you," said he, amused by her fervent tone. Poor little girl! How could she help him? But if it pleased her to think she could, let her try, by all means. At any rate, the human sympathy was sweet to him, and took away something of the soreness engendered by the disappointment and annoyance which had fallen to his lot that day.

SOME WOMEN-POETS OF THE PRESENT REIGN.

"Everybody wants to write poetry nowadays," grumbled a publisher to me lately, "and nobody wants to buy it." Certainly there is in the verse-market at present what would be called in other financial circles a slump. Of the ephemeral magazine verse there is apparently no end either to the supply or the demand, and it cannot be denied that some of it is quite extraordinarily good in spite of its slightness. I have before me half a dozen volumes of poetry written by women of the present day—they contain much that is charm-

ing—much, too, that deserves to rank as real poetry, and had they not been drowned by the great chorus of singing voices I am inclined to think that one or two of these writers might have found a niche, not too obscure, in the Temple of Fame. It were too much to expect that England should again give to the world a poetess of such lasting power as Elizabeth Barrett Browning; and we have, amid a host of singers, no star to set beside that one in the literary firmament.

Perhaps it is indeed because to them

their art is a less serious thing than hers was to Mrs. Browning. In that tender dedication of her poems to her father she tells him that he was a witness "how if this art of poetry had been a less earnest object to me it must have fallen from exhausted hands before this day." With limited experience, with an enclosed life that until well within reach of her fortieth year knows no parallel save that of Heine and his "mattress-grave," she was content to let all the sapped energies of her life, all her education, her extensive reading go to the nourishment of her art, with the result that she stands alone, without rival. Her work will survive—it owed nothing to passing fashion. Who can question the enduring quality of the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*? They must always remain as the final expression of a woman's pure, ideal, passionate love. They are also curiously free from the marring sentimentality which characterized so much of the verse of that period.

They have my heart and life in them [she writes of her poems] they are not empty shells. Poetry has been as serious a thing to me as life itself, and life has been a very serious thing. . . . I never mistook pleasure for the final cause of poetry, nor leisure, for the hour of the poet. . . . I have done my work so far as work, not as mere hand and head work, apart from the personal being, but as the completest expression of that being to which I could attain.

And that is precisely where it may be said that the modern woman has fallen short—that she has not taken her art with sufficient seriousness. Indeed, many of these writers have not been content with poetry alone, but have contributed largely to the ephemeral prose—the articles, essays, and novels of the day. At no time has woman labored under so few restrictions as at the present; she may follow in reason

what career she will. We have only to look back some fifty years to realize what a change has come in the world's attitude towards the problem of the independence of women. We see the Brontë sisters furtively publishing their incomparable work under pseudonyms that might induce their publishers to believe that they were men. We see them calling at distant post-offices for these publishers' answers lest the guilty secret of their authorship should leak out. An elderly lady, known to-day as the author of many novels, told me that when she first began to write, in her teens, more than forty-five years ago, her mother, upon discovering the manuscripts, severely reprimanded her and forthwith destroyed them! A few years later, when she married, she once more took to her pen, thinking that with marriage greater liberty would be vouchsafed to her, but her hopes were vain. Her husband was as shocked when he discovered the nature of her occupation as her mother had been, and a second holocaust was made of the precious manuscripts. For thirty years she did not write a line, and it was only when well advanced in middle life that her first book saw the light, and was rewarded with an immediate popularity. Clearly, then, it was in those days considered scarcely *comme il faut* for a woman to write! But at the present time women enjoy a very large measure of intellectual freedom; they are even encouraged to write from their earliest years, hence we have that disagreeable and unchildlike person, the "child-poet."

But if the present day is destitute of any great name in the list of women-poets we have, it must be acknowledged, a host of minor singers among whom a very high order of poetic fancy and delicate diction prevails. It is, perhaps, a result of the educational equipment of to-day that the technique and form are often so excellent. There

is in many of them a sadness without sentimentality. While often resembling each other, as is almost always the case among contemporary poets, they are without any slavish following of bygone methods, and we find few heedless echoes of Browning and Tennyson among them.

Perhaps the greatest charm of their verse lies in its grace of modern language. In the last fifteen years there seems to have sprung into being a certain well-defined language in poetry and prose, which in default of a better word we must call style. Not always altogether free from preciosity, it is, at any rate, technically admirable, and at its best will survive as the definite expression of the English language in the early years of the present century.

Among so many names the selection of a few presented some difficulty, and I have restricted my choice to those who are still living and whose work has been published in the present reign. The one who stands somewhat alone, and apart, to my thinking, is Miss Ethel Clifford. It is little more than three years since her first slim book of verse, *Songs of Dreams*,¹ was published, but it at once arrested the attention and admiration of the critics. Her passage to recognition was curiously swift—it is not often a young writer meets with such spontaneous praise, especially at a time when "everybody wants to write poetry." There is in her work a strength—a very fine womanly strength—which arrests one in nearly every line she writes. She went back to nature, to the woods, the wet, wild winds, the growing grass. There was little trace of the pessimism that so disfigures the work of many modern writers. Instead she showed a classic gladness for the things of earth. She made, it is true, no attempt to touch the heights of love and passion

that were voiced in the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. Indeed her work is curiously passionless, often impersonal, as of one unawakened to the graver issues of life. But in her own sphere she is astonishingly, wonderfully forceful. Nothing could be more tender than the delicately wrought dedication to her mother of her first volume:

Do you remember how at Airolo
I made a posy of the white and blue,
And thought "such lilies Mary has in
Heaven,"
And brought them to my best-belov'd
—to you?

Dear, as I brought the best at Airolo,
The lilies shining with the morning
dew,
So with the best of these the song I
make—
I bring them to my best-belov'd—to
you!

Her intense love for nature, which permeates nearly every line she writes, is tenderly expressed in her little poem, *The Last Hour*:

O joys of love and joys of fame,
It is not you I shall regret;
I sadden lest I should forget
The beauty woven in earth's name,

The shout and battle of the gale,
The stillness of the sun-rising,
The sound of some deep hidden
spring,
The glad sob of the filling sail,

The first green ripple of the wheat,
The rain-song of the lifted leaves,
The waking birds beneath the eaves,
The voices of the summer heat.

But in *Cain's Song*, which contains some of her finest and most original work, it is expressed with a note of almost passionate defiance:

Outcast am I, but the earth fertile and
kindly
Stretches beneath me. The sun sets
in the west

¹ "Songs of Dreams," Ethel Clifford (John Lane, 1903.)

Golden and red, and I see it while Abel
sleeps blindly
Deaf to the rain, and I hear it! Lord,
which is best?

Branded am I, but the deer, russet and
sable
Still are for quarry. And I hunt not
in vain.

Mine is the triumph of storm and the
gladness of rain, but Abel,
Nothing he knows though his face is
upturned to the rain!

In *Ishmael*, too, the same spirit in-
spires her:

Isaac sits behind his fire,
Eating meat and drinking wine;
In the shelter of his tent
Hath he dreams as rich as thine,
Where the purple mists and blue
Weave a veil that God looks through?

When with swift unsandall'd feet,
Thou the springing turf dost tread
In the passion of the chase,
Long'st thou for the leaven'd bread?
Wouldst thou sleep the scented night
Where the stars are hid from sight?

Of sadder things she writes with
much charm and restraint. One would
like to quote in full her well-known
poem *Vale*, and a *Song of Victory*. But
neither of them is so beautiful as *The
Dark Road*, which appeared in her second
volume, *Love's Journey*.³

There is no light in any path of
Heaven,
Every star is folded in dark sleep;
The clouds hang heavily, the moon is
hidden,
How will she know the road her soul
must keep?

She did not ask for heavenly palaces,
A little human home was her desire;
The intimate, close touch of human
hands—
To love and watch beside a human
fire.

As tears will be remembrance in her
heart

³ "Love's Journey," Ethel Clifford (John
Lane, 1906.)

If she recall her lamp's familiar light,
And as a sword vain pity in her heart
If she should hear her children's cry
to-night.

Ah Mary, Mother, stand by Heaven's
gate
And watch the road for one who
comes to find
In loneliness and fear what Heaven
holds
To comfort her who leaves the earth
behind.

I like, too, that rather Swinburne-like
little poem, *The Harp of Sorrow*:

Sorrow has a harp of seven strings
And plays on it unceasing all the day,
The first string sings of love that is long
dead,
The second sings of lost hopes buried;
The third of happiness forgot and fled.
Of vigil kept in vain the fourth cord
sings,
And the fifth string of roses dropped
away.
The sixth string calls and is un-
answered,
The seventh with your name for ever
rings—

I listen for its singing all the day!

That her verse has the true lyrical
quality is attested by the fact that
much of it has been set to music.

Amongst other writers who, like Miss
Clifford, have been content to rely upon
poetry as the solitary expression of
their art is Miss Olive Custance (Lady
Alfred Douglas), some of whose verse
was first published in the *Yellow Book*,
that production of the nineties which,
while procuring fame for so many of
its contributors, was yet destined to
prove a financial failure. Some half-
dozen years ago Miss Custance pub-
lished her first volume of collected
poems under the title of *Opals*⁴ and it
has since been followed by another
called *Rainbows*.⁴ I think she has a
wider outlook than Miss Clifford,
though her forms are less original and

⁴ "Opals," Olive Custance (John Lane, 1897.)

⁴ "Rainbows," Olive Custance (John Lane,
1902.)

lack the peculiar force of her contemporary's work. She, too, shows a very tender, half mystical love of nature, very tenderly rendered in her poem, *Sunshine*:

O Sunshine Spirit, I have seen
Your gold wings spread aslant the
green;
Have watched their splendors trail
along
The woodland ways where wild flowers
throng,
And seen your slim feet slip between
In gardens where tired feet can wade
Through flowers set thick in slumb'rous
shade
Your fleeting fairy form has crept
Between the shadows unafraid.

Some of her sonnets are very beautiful, and it has struck me as somewhat strange that the sonnet form apparently finds little favor with the poetess of the day, and this is the more surprising when we reflect that Mrs. Browning with her *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, and Mrs. Meynell with her celebrated one *Renouncement* have shown that it is a form in which it is possible for a woman to take front rank.

In her sonnet, *Bereft*, Miss Custance touches a deep, and in some ways an unusual note:

Within my heart there stands a vacant
throne.
I set a king there not so long ago,
The shadow of a man who did not
know
He was belov'd. I sought it there alone,
This silent image that was all my own.
But one day some one whispered to
me low:
"Behold, dear, he is dead whom you
loved so!"
And now the speechless shadow, too,
has flown. . . .
Within my heart there stands an Angel,
dumb,
With large eyes full of tears that never
close
By day nor night, and Memory is her
name.

Pathetic, too, in its futile passion, in its grief-stricken abandonment, is her *Death of Pierrot*:

Pierrot, Pierrot, at first they said you
slept,
And then they told me you would never
wake.
I dared not think—I watched the white
day break,
The yellow lamps go out—I have not
wept!

Love, will you never look at me again
With those rain-colored, heavy-lidded
eyes,
Closed now for ever? Pierrot, was it
wise
To love so madly, since we loved in
vain?

Blue as blue flame is the great sky
above;
The earth is wonderful and glad and
green;
But shut the sunlight out, for I have
seen
Forgetfulness upon the face of love!

We seem to see the grotesque clown-figure with all the comedy blotted out from the white chalked face by the swift tragedy of death. One notices in Miss Custance's work the fastidious selection of the right word—the art of saying much in a few suggestive phrases, the simple directness and spontaneity that characterizes them all. There is much charm and gracefulness about her little poem *Masquerade*:

We dance with proud and smiling lips,
With frank, appealing eyes, with shy
hands clinging.
We sing, and few will question if there
slips
A sob into our singing.

Each has a certain step to learn;
Our prisoned feet moved staidly in set
places,
And to and fro we pass, since life is
stern,
Patiently with masked faces.

I find many lines scattered over her poems that arrest one's attention from their truth and haunting beauty—lines such as:

The Moon has swathed her silver face
in wide
Soft webs of wandering cloud.

Soft-sheathed in sunshine is fate's
sword of pain.

And from her little poem, *In Praise of Love*:

A singing wonder, ever on the wing—
A magical, mad mood, too sweet to
stay.

The sonnet form has found more favor with Miss Laurence Alma-Tadema than with either of the writers whose works I have quoted above. Many poems in the "magic metre" are to be found in her volumes, *The Songs of Womanhood*^s and *Realms of Unknown Kings*.^e Although she is the author of more than one novel and several plays, it is in the realm of poetry that her chief claim to distinction lies. Writing in a minor key she shows always great delicacy of touch, a tender appreciation of nature. Very charming is her sonnet beginning:

I will not close the door, O Love, on
thee,
Although I fear thee still. . . .

But now that I behold
The earth again, and that my wings
are gone,
I will take refuge simply on thy breast.
No miracle I see—no rapturous dawn
Of an unearthly day: I will but rest
My weary eyes and lay between thy
hands

These empty fingers that have ceased
to clutch
At stars. Because my spirit under-
stands
Renouncement thou wilt give, maybe.

Or one beginning:

^s "Songs of Womanhood," L. Alma-Tadema (Grant Richards, 1903.)

When spring awakens, and no spring is
there,
None for the heart, it is a joyless
thing. . . .

. . . The solitary ways
Are primroseless, and vain the violet
days.

It is the frustrate or unreturned love
which forms the theme of much of her
verse. But even where it is most sad
it never lacks a picturesque quality,
and is always free from morbid
sentiment.

Hadst thou but willed it—thou that sit-
test there
Indifferent—I might have been thy
heart,
I might have been thy crown—I, even
I—
And dragged thee to the summit of
the hill,
Holding thee there; but such was not
thy will.
One year I gave thee of my faith; thine
eye
Was master. Now I shake me free
and part,
Spreading white wings upon the win-
ter air.

Much the same note is sounded in
A Leave-Taking:

Where thou art
I may not be; these eyes must lose
their light,
Silence invade my ear—death, death to
all
That yesterday was very life. . . . I call
These truths unto my soul—it will not
hear,
But smiles within me still, as one
whose ear
Is held by distant music in the night.

And in *Afterwards*:

Have I not lain
On the hill-tops in the sun? I knew the
sound
Of joy's approach; my being memory-
bound

^e "Realms of Unknown Kings," L. Alma-Tadema (Grant Richards, 1897.)

Cares nothing for the wind and the
hard rain.
All's well! Why should I grieve for
you? My part
Was to attain, not to possess, your
heart,
Therefore I thank you for a day whose
grace,
Outliving hope, in bitterness is sweet.

From the heavy ill-concealed pain of
these it is a relief to turn to her slight
dainty poem, *The Commonwealth*:

Oh, wonder of the hills and sky,
How dear your beauty to my sight!
The winter noon, the sea's delight,
The ruddy moorland far and high,
The pendant larch's silver white,
The golden wind-blown leaves that lie—
How I thank God for all this night!

A few years ago there was published
a little book called *Hand in Hand*,⁷ by
a Mother and Daughter. It is now no
longer a secret that the mother and
daughter were the mother and sis-
ter of Rudyard Kipling. Mrs. Flem-
ing had, it is true, published a
novel prior to this; indeed, her con-
tribution to the work in question
was a somewhat meagre one, yet pos-
sessing an arresting and unusual
power. Her sonnet, *Love's Murderer*,
though technically imperfect, is a page
torn from the very heart of life. It
would seem impossible to quote it ex-
cept in full:

Since Love is dead, stretched here be-
fore us dead,
Let us be sorry for the quiet clay;
Hope and offence alike have passed
away,
The glory long had left his vanquished
head,
Poor shadowed glory of a distant day—
But can you give no pity in its stead?
I see your hard eyes have no tears to
shed,
But has your heart no kindly word to
say?
Were you his murderer or was it I?

⁷"Hand in Hand," by a Mother and Daughter
(Elkin Mathews, 1902.)

I do not care to ask—there is no need—
Since gone is gone and dead is dead
indeed,
What use to wrangle of the how and
why?
I take all blame—I take it! Draw not
nigh—
Ah, do not touch him, lest Love's corpse
should bleed!

The art of saying much in few words
is hers, as the following "uncomfort-
able" little poem bears witness:

I thought we had a life-time at the
least
To spend together,
And so I sat me laughing at the feast
While my love faced bad weather.

There would be time to recompense all
sorrow,
He should be sad to-day and glad
to-morrow . . .
So he set forth unknissed upon his way,
And he died yesterday.

Many mothers of soldier sons must
have been touched by her poem *Spion
Kop*, with its almost homely pathos:

Young Never-Grow-Old, with your
heart of gold,
And the dear boy's face upon you,
It is hard to tell, though we know it
well,
That the grass is growing upon you.
Flowers and grass and the graveyard
mould
Over the eyes of you, Never-Grow-
Old,
Over the heart of you—over each part
of you—
All your dear body, our Never-Grow-
Old.

Never-Grow-Old, the theft of time,
His daily stealthy robbing,
Is not for you, slain in your prime;
This one thought stays my sobbing.
Never for you the flagging strength,
The warm young heart grown cold;
You earn your child pet-name at length:
We called you Never-Grow-Old;
Kissed curls and called you "Young
Never-Grow-Old"

The youngest 'mid the angel bands

That shout among the stars,
And wing to work their Lord's com-
mands

Beyond our prison bars,
God's soldier still through the streets
of gold

In your shining harness, Never-Grow-
Old.

And on looking through the contribu-
tion—no inconsiderable one—of the
women-poets of our day it is hard to
say why any or all of these writers, of
whose work I have tried to give char-
acteristic examples, should have failed
to attract something of the immense
vogue which has been the need in times
gone by of such writers as Mrs. He-
mans and Miss Adelaide Anne Procter.
It is possible that had any one of these
poetesses lived forty or fifty years ago,
when there was less rivalry in the field
—when there were fewer people who, to
quote the publisher again, “wanted to
write poetry” — they might have
achieved a far greater measure of suc-
cess. But now it is hard to say that
one excels above another to any defi-
nite degree—that one fails precisely
where another succeeds, and *vice versa*.
There is an undeniable “family like-
ness” about much of the verse, yet no
one can say that it is not fresh, orig-

The Nineteenth Century and After.

inal, and in great measure distinctive.
Who can distinguish at first sight the
works of one of the Elizabethan minor
poets from another? There is a fash-
ion in these things. Take, for example,
Miss Ethel Clifford's *The Last Hour*,
Miss Olive Custance's *Sunlight*, and
Miss Alma-Tadema's *The Commonweal*.
Nature poems all—all, too, delicate,
tender, and spiritual. They are won-
derfully alike—the same spirit inspires
them—a close, tender, intimate observa-
tion of nature seen across the poet's
own mood. They belong to our day—
they are all in the modern way—who
shall deny its charm? But one feels
that any of these three writers could
have written all three poems!

Much technical excellence, a sense of
form, of color, of the *mot juste*—these
are the characteristics of our modern
women-poets. If their art is as the
art of the miniature-painter, small, re-
stricted, limited, lacking in breadth, it
is within those limitations and restric-
tions a very perfect thing. One may
well ask who, out of this chorus of
singers, shall survive the test of time?
The ultimate assessment of the value—
as literature—of this poetry must be left
to the decision of future generations.

Isabel Clarke.

L'ARISTOCRATE.

When first Anastase saw it dart
swiftly across the grass he thought
that it was a white rabbit.

Not indeed that Anastase knew much
about rabbits in their natural state.
He was Parisian born and bred, and
had not often strayed so far out of the
city as on this autumn day of 1789,
when he stood peering furtively into
the little garden at Neuilly.

Anastase possessed a fine Christian
name, but little else. Good looks were

certainly not his. He was at that age
when the traces of a young and bristly
beard may, if their owner please,
adorn his chin, and Anastase did so
please. His vague mouth was easily
moved to a grin, though a spark of
ferocity shone sometimes in his stupid
little eyes. He wore a soiled red cap,
a dirty blouse, a forlorn pair of striped
trousers, and sabots which did not
match. Turning a piece of grass in his
mouth, he shifted from one leg to the

other as he watched for the reappearance of the white rabbit from the clump of verbena and wondered whether he could possibly induce it to come within striking distance of him. For Anastase had a very healthy appetite, and the prospect of a meal appeared remote.

Yet Anastase had a home, and he had a bread-winning mother, whose vocation was that of a fishwife at the Halles, and who gave him more to eat than she reserved for herself, and cuffed him, for all his nascent beard, when there was nothing for either. This at least kept him warm, and lately he had been more often warmed than fed. But yesterday had his mother sworn violently at him, dealt him several blows with a mop-handle, and finally, embracing him, said that better times were coming. She then gave him her share of the meal that she was preparing, which Anastase took and consumed because he dared not do otherwise. Nor indeed did it enter his head to protest. This insensibility was the effect of living under a despotism.

Anastase's presence at Neuilly was also a result of the same system of government; it had transpired upon enquiry that his vigorous parent, in common with some thousand of her sisters, contemplated a personal interview with her sovereigns at Versailles.

"What, ask the Austrian for bread?" Anastase had said contemptuously.

His mother fixed him with a fierce eye. Like many of her class she was, or had been, a royalist at heart. "Never let me hear you use that name again!" she screamed, aiming at him a blow which he was lucky enough to dodge. "You shall not see her then, *misérable!*"

And she kept her word. When the yelling horde of starving women started for Versailles on the morning of October the fifth, Anastase was not

among the rabble which accompanied them. To see the pikes and not to be allowed to carry one—to hear the *Ca ira* and not to be permitted to swell it—was ever parental authority stretched so far, to receive so incredible an obedience? *Mère Frochot* was possibly the best obeyed individual in all France that day.

"Mayn't I go out at all, then?" asked Anastase, almost whimpering.

"Yes," said the tyrant, "you may. You may go anywhere you like, except the way we go. But if you set so much as a toe on the *Sèvres* road—well, you'll not want to set one anywhere else for a long time! Be sure I shall know of it."

And the great gaunt woman strode away to the *Place de la Grève*. For all her championship of royalty, she had a rusty sabre at her hip.

Anastase sulked for two hours. Then he lounged about by the quays. Every one who was not a part of it was talking of the march to Versailles. This annoyed him. Finally he thought that he too would go out of Paris, and shortly found himself, with no design at all, looking enviously at this green garden in Neuilly.

And as he looked, and speculated upon the rabbit tribe, and the fortunes of the rich, he heard a voice proceeding from the direction of the house. "*Hermine! Hermine!*" it called. "*Viens, ma petite! Viens, Hermine! viens pour ton déjeuner!*"

And at this sound the white animal emerged from the tuft of verbena and began to trot with moderate haste towards the house. It was then that Anastase saw his mistake, for the so-called rabbit had a long bushy tail, which at that moment it was carrying stiffly erect, after the fashion of a banner. It was a beautiful white cat.

To Anastase the idea of mistaking a cat for a rabbit appeared, for some reason, supremely ludicrous. Forget-

ting that he was trespassing, he gave vent to a loud laugh. This caused the piece of grass to fall out of his mouth, and when he straightened himself after picking it up, he dropped it again from surprise. Where she had come from was a mystery, but there, a few paces away from him, stood a very young girl in a white dress. She had the cat in her arms. Anastase had never seen any one so fair, so white, so beautiful. She looked at him with dilated eyes.

"What are you doing here?" she asked, quite gently, but with the faintest air of command.

"*Dame!*" said Anastase sulkily. "How you frightened me! I am doing no harm."

The child—she looked about fourteen—glanced at his lanky ragged figure, and up at his unprepossessing features.

"Would you please to go, then?"

But Anastase seemed unable to take his eyes off her. He shifted from one foot to the other, and a vague smile came over his face. The cat's mistress looked more puzzled then alarmed. She scanned him again, very seriously, and added, "Unless there is anything that you want?"

And at that a strange daring came over Anastase. Usually he shared the profound hatred and somewhat nervous contempt with which his neighbors regarded an aristocrat, but in face of this aristocrat—for of course she was one—he found his theories sit unaccountably loose. Perhaps it was because she was so small.

"I should like—to touch your cat, Mamzelle. I—I have never seen one like her before."

For one instant the little lady hesitated, clasping her treasure closer. Then she came a trifle nearer.

"You may stroke her," she said graciously.

And Anastase's large dirty hand rested for a second on the white fur.

He drew it gently along, smiling his wide and rather inane smile. But Hermine did not smile. On the contrary, her tail began to sway ominously under her mistress's arm. Never had so *bourgeois* a touch profaned her coat. And as Anastase, almost in an ecstasy, prepared to pass his hand a second time along that expanse of snow, Hermine struggled, and turning, buried her pearly little teeth, sharp as needles, in the objectionable member. As her unfortunate admirer hastily withdrew it she leaped from the encircling arms and fled swiftly into a bush.

The child gave a cry of horror. Perhaps she expected some retaliatory measures on the part of the victim. But the youth was looking at his bleeding thumb with an air of pleased curiosity.

"*Tiens!* what small teeth!" was his remark.

"It is bleeding! Oh, I am so sorry. Never, never has she done such a thing!"

Anastase sucked his hand. "I thought it was a rabbit," he murmured rather inconsequently.

"If Monsieur will allow me to tie it up," said the child, with the phrase and the tone she would have used to one of her own rank; to such a height had Anastase's misfortunes exalted him.

But the hero was too shy for this privilege. The sight of the proffered scrap of cambric alarmed him, and he thrust his hand deep into his trouser pocket.

"It's nothing, Mamzelle. I was bitten by a dog once," he said proudly. "Look, your cat is coming out!"

The outraged mistress turned round. Underneath the lowest laurel leaves a pair of brilliant eyes watched her.

"Ah, little serpent!" she cried, stooping. "Ah, graceless little viper! Come here that I may scold thee. Come here and beg Monsieur's pardon!"

But at this exordium Hermine re-

treated into the inner fastnesses of the laurel and was no more seen.

"No *déjeuner* for thee, then," said her mistress with determination. Anastase wished the meal might be passed on to him, and as if the little lady had surprised this desire on his face she said quickly and rather timidly.

"Would you like something too—some refreshment?"

Anastase unhesitatingly admitted that he would. But when the girl told him to follow her to the house he hung back. This aristocrat and her marvelous cat might be charming, but in her chateau was probably a dungeon like those which the demolition of the Bastille had disclosed only this summer. It was much better for a good patriot to remain without, and put some bread and meat in his pocket to eat on the road. Suppressing his reasons, Anastase intimated his preference for this course, and while the white lady departed to comply he lay down and tried fruitlessly to lure Hermine from the laurel bush. It did not strike him how trustingly he was being treated by her owner. By drawing his finger along the dead leaves beneath the bush he succeeded in gaining a scratch from a flashing white paw.

"She has scratched me!" he announced with pride as Mademoiselle came back over the lawn. But his grin was so purely the grin of delight that this time the vixen's proprietress did not apologize. She watched Anastase stuffing the bread and meat into his pocket.

"With this," said the latter, suddenly becoming talkative, "and with what my mother brings back from Versailles, we shall do, Mamzelle."

"Versailles," repeated the child in surprise; "why is your mother at Versailles?"

"She has gone to see the King and the Aus—the Queen," responded Anastase importantly.

Mademoiselle looked still more puzzled. "Your mother—is she then?"—

"My mother belongs to the Halles, Mamzelle. She has gone to ask the King for bread. I saw them go—thousands of them, and men too. Oh! the fine sight!"

Mademoiselle had turned very pale.

"Thousands of them!" she repeated. "Then there will be fighting!"—

"Fighting?" said Anastase, who had begun to move off. "Why should there be fighting? My mother loves the King and Queen."

"It means some disaster!" said the child, wringing her hands. "Please go! please go! I must send to see. There will be fighting with the *gardes du corps*. Oh, Gaston, Gaston!"

"My mother loves the King and Queen," reiterated Anastase, repeating the fact lately impressed on him. "Good-bye, Mamzelle. She will protect the *gardes du corps*."

But the promise of this protection, which seemed to Anastase so potent, could not have carried much conviction to the heart of his benefactress, for as he slouched out of the gate he turned, and saw that she had sunk down on the damp grass by the laurel bush with her hands before her face. He was sorry for the distress of this aristocrat, though he did not grasp its cause, and he stood a moment meditating. Just then the white cat emerged from the laurel in pursuit of a dead leaf. Anastase watched her gambols for a minute longer with an admiring smile, and then, considerably cheered, set forth on the road back to Paris, munching as he went.

II.

Outside the guard-house at the Montmartre barrier on a warm night of June a group of persons of more or less unprepossessing appearance were lounging and talking. It was not ex-

actly their business, since the municipal guard was there for the purpose, but it was a congenial employment, this stopping of all out-going travellers and demanding their passports. In this task a good patriot might both show his zeal and enjoy some fun, for the last traveller had been a *ci-devant* attempting to escape with a forged pass. That was more than an hour ago, and he was now safely on his way back under arrest, having played his last stake, and lost.

Little but flight, indeed, remained to the royalists by the middle of the year of grace 1792, and it was quite worth while to spend an hour or so at the barrier and see them trying to get through. Sometimes, too, there were pickings to be had; this last *aristo*, for instance, had been relieved, when he was stopped, of several small objects worth possessing. One of these now shone, beneath the light from the *reverbère*, in the hands of a youth who could scarcely believe his good luck, for it was a gold snuffbox, heavily chased, with some glittering stone set in the lid. It seemed to the present owner so dazzling a fortune that he forgot, as he looked at it, how he had laughed when it was taken from its past possessor, and how the *ci-devant*, with his white face, had laughed too. A little later an informal drawing of lots, consequent upon a quarrel had bestowed the spoil on Anastase Frochot.

It was very welcome, for the two years and eight months which had passed over Anastase's untidy head since he watched a white kitten at Neuilly had not improved his fortunes. True, he was bigger and stronger, he could and did carry a pike on occasions with the best, and he had now no mother to cuff him. But somehow he missed her blows, and the scanty savings which she had left him had long ago come to an end. He sometimes got

odd jobs to do in the Cité, but he was often hungry, and a disposition never very industrious had found still less invitation to industry in times so compact of riot and robbery. So at this moment Anastase, standing apart from his comrades, turned over the little box and wondered how much it would fetch. The occupation showed his face a good deal less vacant and something more brutalized than of yore. His old wide smile had with it a twist of ferocity and cunning.

"To think that they carry things like this in their pockets!" he was reflecting. "*Sacrébleu!* I wish heaven would send us another."

As if in answer to his prayer the noise of wheels was heard approaching in the soft night. The whole place was on the alert in an instant; the guard turned out, the loungers started forward from the wall. "Another fly come to the web, brothers," shouted a jocular spirit. "Let us see if it be a fat one."

The carriage approached at a steady trot. Anastase thrust his treasure into his pocket.

"*Halte!*" The command was echoed by half a score of voluntary assistants and they sprang to the horses' heads. But the driver pulled up readily enough.

"Descend, citizens, and show your passports."

The loafers crowded round as the soldiers opened the door of the *berline*, and there emerged, first, a handsome young man in a long *redingote*, and then a young girl in a cloak, whom he assisted to alight. She was not veiled, and as the light struck on her pale, frightened little face, Anastase recognized his *démoiselle* of the white cat.

He had never seen her since that day. Once or twice he had thought of her, but more than once of the wonderful kitten which he had taken for a rabbit, comparing, not to their advantage, the starved tabbles of the Cité with

that phenomenon. Directly he saw the lady of Neuilly he knew, of course, that she and her companion were aristocrats escaping. He followed them in.

The young man was showing his passport to the official designated for the purpose.

"The citizen Mosset," read the latter aloud, sitting at his high desk, "aged 26; height, hum, hum; occupation, bookseller; destination, Rouen." He broke off and looked at the traveller, who sustained the scrutiny firmly. "The *citoyenne* Mosset, wife of the above, aged seventeen; height—your wife is very young, citizen."

"We have only been married a week," responded the young man. He was pale, but perfectly calm, while the girl was trembling visibly, and seemed to be looking furtively, among the rough and scowling faces, for some one who was not there.

"*Corbleu!* It is a honeymoon, then!"

"If the citizen likes to put it so," said the young man with the glimmer of a smile. "In reality it is a less pleasant journey which we take—that of business. We are hoping to set up a shop in Rouen."

"*Tiens!* but he is a good liar, that one," thought Anastase. "Mademoiselle is fortunate!"

"And your stock-in-trade, where is that, then?" asked the official with an air of cleverness. "I see no signs of it."

The fugitive aristocrat smiled again, as one who smiles at an ignorant question. "We are going to treat for a business," he explained. "Surely the citizen would not have us encumber ourselves with a library before we have a roof to put it under."

"Oh, in that case!" said the commissary satisfied. "Good luck to you, then, Citizen Mosset. Here is your passport; it is quite in order." The young man took it with a steady hand, and began to replace it in his pocket-

book, not noticing the attention with which the loiterer nearest to her was regarding his companion.

"What has the *citoyenne* got under her cloak?"

The girl shrank back as the owner of the rough voice seemed about to pull aside her mantle, and the young man swung round, his eyes on fire. But he had mastered himself in an instant.

"Show them, *mon amie*," he said gently, and as she seemed reluctant, or too terrified, to obey, he lifted her cloak a little way himself. Anastase gazed open-mouthed, for in Mademoiselle's arms, more beautiful than ever, was her white cat, half asleep. Stifled cries of admiration went round the room, and the young man with a smile dropped the corner of the cloak and offered his arm to his wife.

"Stop a moment!" cried the same voice. Its owner advanced to the throne of authority. "Citizen commissary, that fine beast is no bookseller's cat. It is such a cat as would belong to these *sacrés aristos*."

"That is true," said the commissary reflectively, and he got down from his stool. "Let me see the animal again." And again Hermine's repose was disturbed.

The commissary's brow grew dark as he gazed upon her. And Hermine, thoroughly annoyed, uttered a little moan of vexation, and, fixing him with her sea-green eyes, began to swish her tail. She did not in the least realize that two lives were hanging upon it while she thus drew attention to its size.

"It is true," repeated the commissary. "None but *ci-devants* could have a cat with such a tail, with such fur, and of such a color. Your passport again, if you please, Citizen Mosset."

But ere the sinister turn of affairs produced by Hermine's presence became any darker the door opened. A

very tall man in the uniform of the National Guards came in.

"Ah, *bonsoir*, citizen," he said genially to the commissary. "*Bonsoir*, Mosset; *bonsoir*, *ma cousine*. Off to Rouen, I suppose?"

The little lady of Neuilly, with her cloak thrown back and Hermine tightly clasped in her arms, turned to him with a look of unspeakable relief. The commissary seemed staggered.

"Citizen," he said respectfully, for this was one whose patriotism could not for a moment be doubted, "the passport is correct, it is true, but since this cat"—

"What cat?"

"This cat which the *citoyenne* does not deny to be hers, and which could belong to no one but a *ci-devant*"—

The new-comer interrupted with a laugh. "And which does still belong to one, I'll wager," he said. "Come, has my cousin been so untruthful as to pretend that it is hers? You must know that she has a passion for stray cats, and this one, I suppose, has taken her fancy. But all the cats in the world can't make my pretty little cousin other than a good patriot."

"What my wife's cousin says is perfectly true," put in the young man. "I was going to explain, had you given me time. My wife found this fine cat about a week ago wandering about, and took it in. Pray permit her to take it with her, for she is becoming much attached to it."

"Everything with you happened a week ago," returned the commissary gruffly and suspiciously. "You were married a week ago, you found the cat a week ago, and I should like to know whether a week ago you had not quite a different name, and that with a title in front of it?"

Applause of a savage nature greeted this thrust. Three people there knew how near it went home, and Anastase guessed, for it was suddenly revealed

to him that this must be the unknown "Gaston" for whose safety Mademoiselle had been so anxious on a certain October day. The National Guard frowned.

"Since I tell you that the *citoyenne* is my cousin," he said with dignity, "and that I have known this young man, whom she has just married, for several years, I think there can be no question of titles, citizen commissary. You will be taking me for a duke in disguise next. We waste time in trifles. You yourself say that the passport is in order. *Eh bien!* if you still need to be convinced, I am sure that my cousin will readily give up this aristocratic cat to prove her *civisme*."

He bent over the girl smiling, but his eyes were very anxious. And the eyes of the little bride—for such she really was—swam in imploring tears.

"I couldn't!" she breathed desperately.

"Mademoiselle—Madame—you must! Every minute that you stay here"—

"I had rather die than part with Hermine!"

"*Soit!*" said her former servant, in a voice audible to her alone. "But will you set M. le Comte's life too against a cat's?"

She gave no answer to the question, but she glanced in agony round the circle of hostile faces. Already they were closing in on them—already a hand was laid on her husband's shoulder, and he was looking at her sombrely. She saw that they were all waiting for her, and she knew suddenly that she had more need of courage than ever she would have in her life again—no, not if she were to go to the scaffold.

"Certainly, the cat is not mine," she said in a clear little voice with scarcely a tremble in it. "My cousin is right. I ought not to keep her. I—I will leave her here. To whom shall I give her?" All the faces swam before her, so that she could not distinguish one to whom:

she would be less unwilling to commit Hermine than to the rest.

"Give her to me," said a hurried voice in her ear. "I remember you at Neuilly—no, devil take me if I say a word of it; but your cat bit me—I'd like to have her—I don't mind if she does bite—give her quickly, and go!"

She turned, looked Anastase in the face for an instant—perhaps recognized him, and then thrust Hermine convulsively into his arms.

Five minutes later the *berline* was rattling along outside the barrier, and she was sobbing her heart out on her husband's breast. And the tall National Guard, standing looking after them, wiped his forehead and muttered.

"It was well I came as I promised. *Je m'en doutais. Ce damné chat!* I knew he would make trouble!"

Which was polite neither to Hermine's sex nor to her character in general.

III.

And thus began Anastase's life with Mademoiselle Hermine.

To be quite truthful, it did not begin over well. When Hermine's new owner slipped out from the guard-room he learnt for the first time the extraordinary strength which resides in a cat's lithe little body. Hermine neither bit nor scratched; she kicked. Twice Anastase nearly let her go. At last he put her under his blouse, on which she ceased to struggle so violently and merely uttered little moans similar to those which the commissary's inspection had drawn from her. Never having heard a cat moan in this way before—and indeed it is not usual—Anastase was afraid that he was stifling or choking her. Had he but known, it was moral rather than physical agitation which induced the plaint, and when he loosened his grasp a little the outraged one continued to proffer it no less loudly.

But as he hurried along the walls too died away, and Hermine had recourse to a last protest, stiffening herself into a sort of cataleptic rigidity, and thereby filling her bearer with misgivings which he dared not allay by stopping to examine her condition. It was therefore with a thankful heart that, standing at last in the darkness of his dirty little room *au troisième*, he felt his captive leap vigorously from his opened arms. As the light thud was audible on the bare boards he searched hastily for the tinder-box.

Yes, she was superb. Partially obscured from view by the broken rungs of his only chair, whereunder she had retreated, her spotless coat on end with indignation, Hermine surveyed her ravisher with orbs alight with a fire surpassing anything that ever filled the angriest human eye. The pride and joy in Anastase's heart was crossed with an insidious dismay. Would she always look at him like that? He set down the candle and approached her, calling her name in tones as gentle as his natural roughness of voice would allow. In a flash she was up on the high window-sill, her uplifted tail, which seemed to have grown almost as large as her body, showing against the dirty glass and the gloom of the summer night. Anastase made one step towards her, but only one. It was evident that a less highly born cat would have spat at him; Hermine's visage had all the expression of the act without its sound, and the citizen Frochot came no nearer. He was daunted by her undisguised hostility, and at last, a new idea having occurred to him, he crept out of the room to procure some milk.

When he came back Hermine was still on the window-sill, but her tail was folded majestically round her feet. She now looked more scornful than furious, and emanated a chilling atmosphere of unapproachableness.

Anastase set the saucer of milk at a respectful distance and prepared to retire for the night. His toilet being of the simplest, the unfortunate youth lay long on his pile of sacking, the candle burning at his side, ere Mademoiselle Hermine descended from her perch, and walked in a queenly fashion to the broken saucer. The watcher raised himself on to his elbow, full of excitement. Hermine leisurely paced round the receptacle, contemplated the pattern, sniffed at the contents, and was then good enough to put her little nose down to the liquid. Anastase held his breath. The next instant, with a violent shake of her head, she retreated hastily from the saucer, and very markedly sat down with her back to it. The dismayed Anastase fell back upon his couch, racking his brains for the reason of her disgust. The milk, for which he had bartered one of his last *sous* on the next floor, had seemed to him very good; he would have been only too glad of it himself. He could not know that the best milk in the world was unsupportable to Hermine unless it were warmed to a certain temperature.

The change of surroundings, which so tries the heart of any cat, was rendered triply offensive to Hermine by the immense descent in comfort and cleanliness—even in the quantity of furniture suitable for repose. Anastase's person clearly bred in her, as at their first meeting, a distaste amounting to horror. Not only did she consider him *canaille*, but she feared him. He could not come within a couple of yards of her but she fled, suspicious as a creature of the woods, forgetting that all her life man had been her humble slave, and reverting to the primitive instincts of her race. For two days she ate nothing—and Anastase very little. He was profoundly dejected.

On the third day, however, Hermine recovered from her phase of fright and

primitive instincts, and began slowly to reassume that air *grande dame* which was peculiarly hers. Her breeding reasserted itself, and, looking now on Anastase as harmless, though excessively objectionable, she condescended to receive from his trembling hand a portion of fish, procured by the sale of the *ci-devant's* snuff-box. There is no doubt that hunger was the real source of this complaisance, but Hermine was at once too clever and too well-bred to let this be seen. She partook of the offering daintily, as one to whom all food is but a vile necessity. For appearance' sake, probably, she left the tail end. It was not quite so fresh as the rest. The elated Anastase ate it himself at the close of the day.

He did right to be uplifted. Hermine had set a paw on the path of resignation and tolerance, from which she never withdrew it. As day followed day she realized that she was dependent upon this gutter-boy for the food which though neither its preparation nor its presentation was to her taste, was fairly wholesome and abundant. She may even have been touched, in her rather adamant little heart, by his really pathetic attempts to propitiate and to please her. It was little indeed that he could do; he could not possibly provide the silken cushions on which she was accustomed to slumber, nor the Sèvres from which she always ate and drank, nor the pretty garden where she used to play. The loss of this latter was perhaps Hermine's most serious deprivation, and the leads outside Anastase's little window afforded but a sorry compensation. When the youth had recovered from the twofold horror which seized him the first time that she had sprung out there—fear lest she should miss her footing and fear lest she should stray to another house, both groundless terrors, either action being impossible—he left the window always open, and Her-

mine developed quite a fancy for the gutter, sitting there in the sun for hours together, meditating or washing herself. She washed at least five hours a day.

It was partly these thorough-going ablutions which first suggested to Anastase the idea that his room was not, perhaps, quite clean. It was a thought of staggering novelty. Waking once in the dark hours of the morning, he heard, almost with awe, the sound of Hermine's passionate washing. She lay near him on a chair, and he could not see her, but the rasp of her little tongue over her soft person, and the jiggle of the chair-legs on the uneven floor filled the silent room with the testimony of an almost morbid cleanliness and Anastase with questioning. Why did she wash so much, *la petite aristocrate*? Other animals did not, and certainly not human beings—not, at least, those of his acquaintance. Could it—could it be that she was galled by living in his room?

Next morning, much disturbed, he looked at Hermine with a gloomy eye. She had been with him a fortnight. Perhaps she was not quite as resplendent as when she came. And the floor? He went downstairs and borrowed a broom, a scrubbing-brush and a pail.

Now of all cats that have ever lived Mademoiselle was the least endowed with what is known as a mission in life. Few of her race, indeed, are weighted with so inæsthetic a burden. But the fact remains that this aristocratic and self-willed little lady, who was born to be a moment's ornament, who had no morals, no desire for self-improvement, and certainly not a vestige of altruism, took her place as a force making for righteousness in the career of Anastase Frochot. It was not only that the room became cleaner. Anastase had never in his life been possessed of an object on which to lav-

ish his somewhat uncouth affections. He had it now. The afternoon on which Hermine of her own free will first jumped on to his knee was a crisis in his moral history. His love for this white, soft creature, who would often come now when he called her, became thereafter a passion which dragged him home early from the seductive purleus of the city lest she should be hungry, which kept him there if she was gracious, which even led him to the signal step of an attempt for her sake, to get regular work.

The time sped on thus till the red Tenth of August. On the evening of that day Hermine, oblivious of the events which were taking place in the Place du Carrousel and elsewhere, was performing her toilet at the open window, when heavy footsteps and voices of an excessive loudness upon the stair caused her to withdraw hastily to the gutter outside. People very rarely came into her proprietor's apartment, but she knew that there were other human beings in the house, of a species recalling those most objectionable persons who had stared at her on the night when her mistress had been torn from her. Two of these, invisible but only too audible, paused now outside the door.

"*Corbleu!* what a day! Who lives here? *le petit Frochot?*" The handle was tried. "Frochot! Frochot! let us in!" And the owner of the voice began to batter thunderously upon the door.

"Stop that noise, Rameau, you fool!" said another voice. "Frochot is not home yet. I saw him when I left stripping a Swiss in the Cour Royale. *Dieu!* how well we have fought! Come and have a drink—I could drink the blood of tyrants." The voice uplifted itself: *Qu'un sang impur abreuve nos sillons!*"—and broke off to greet another comer.

"*Hé—le petit Frochot! Nom d'un chien,*

but you have done well for yourself, *mon enfant!* We thought you were back, but you have been paying Capet's lodgings a visit, *hein?*"

"I have been in the palace, yes," said the voice of the citizen Frochot. "*Sang-dieu*, you should go to that shop if you want to furnish. Look here!"

"For my part," put in the first voice, "I don't want their fine clothes. Give me their cursed lives, that's all I ask. I like to feel the pike go through a satin coat."

Anastase laughed loudly. "I too, Citizen Rameau. But it spoils it. Go to the devil, and let me in! I'm tired, I tell you."

The pair of voices protested that their owners would enter too, on which Anastase was heard to commit himself to perdition if they did. He seemed to be pushing them away, for the sounds receded, until at last, with a burst of laughter, came up the stairs the question, "Why does he keep his door so tightly locked?" and the reply, "He's got an *aristo* hiding there!"—a pleasantry obviously too absurd to be worth the trouble of a retort.

When it was comparatively quiet the door was unlocked and Anastase came in—a sinister, wild-eyed figure, transformed by the passion of slaughter and the lust of battle, with a long butcher's knife thrust into his belt, red stains on his rags, and a bandaged hand. He fastened the door and threw down upon the floor from over his shoulder a medley of objects; the uniform coat of a Swiss Guard, an empty scabbard swinging from a belt of white and gold, a figured coverlet of Chinese workmanship, all green and yellow dragons, several pieces of lace, and a portion of tapestry hacked off a chair. Then, disengaging from his pocket a couple of watches, a *bonbonnière*, and a little timepiece in Dresden china, he put them on the table and looked round for his cat.

"Hermine! Hermine!" he called in a thick voice. Hermine was frightened and made no sign, whereupon Anastase went round the room, uttering curses. "Have they got in after all? Little Hermine, where are you?"

At last he saw her outside the window, and leant out to her. But Hermine backed away from his strange voice and bandaged hand, conscious perhaps of the atmosphere surrounding him. Seeing that she was safe, Anastase did not persist in her capture, but went unsteadily to his pile of sacking and flung himself down upon it. In the court below a fire blazed and triumphant figures danced around it all night long.

Alas for the fleeting nature of both good and bad impressions. As Anastase had shown how skin-deep were the effects of contact with his *aristocrate*, so did Hermine forget or condone the temporary shock of his lapse, and remember the tenth of August only as the epoch of the return of a former luxury. For when the rest of the spoil from the Tuilleries had been sold or pawned, the silken coverlet snatched from the bed of a princess still decorated the garret, and thereon Hermine complacently slumbered, while Anastase roamed the streets with the key of his room in his pocket. And neither of them knew that his conduct was beginning to attract attention in the house, thickly peopled as a rabbit warren, where an inmate might be as secure from curiosity as in a desert, but where a chance word might light a flame of suspicion very hard of extinction. That word, though purely in jest, had already been spoken, and it was remembered when Anastase continued to keep his meagre apartment inviolable, admitting no one even when he was there,—being firmly persuaded that to see Hermine was to desire her, and knowing how slender was the barrier erected by his neighbors between de-

sire and possession. That some person was already bitten with this longing he was convinced by seeing one evening, on opening his door suddenly, an undistinguishable form rise precipitately from a listening attitude on the threshold and scurry down the stairs.

It was the afternoon of the 25th of August. Paris was astir with the freshly-arrived news of the surrender of Longwy. Anastase, as he came home-wards, was not sure what the tidings meant, nor was he quite prepared to believe the prognostication that the Prussians would be at the gates in a fortnight, as they were saying in the streets. In the dirty courtyard of his home they were saying it too, with alarm and asseverations, but when he tried to engage a fellow-lodger on the subject the man muttered something and turned away.

Voices, as he was halfway up the filthy, creaking staircase, came down to him, and catching his own name he began to run up. The little landing on to which his door opened was occupied by a group of three people; two men, inmates of the house, stood there as a sort of bodyguard to Madame Clémenceau the *conciërge*, who was looking through the keyhole. Fury seized Anastase, and he came up the remaining stairs with a bound.

"What are you doing, old witch?" he shouted, and, taking her by surprise, thrust her fat person away and got between her and the door. Shaking with rage the old woman tried to throw herself upon him, but one of the men held her back.

"Wait—wait till they come," he whispered loudly.

"Wait till who come?" demanded Anastase wrathfully. "And you, Gros Jean, what are you doing here? Be off, or I will throw you down the stairs!" As he advanced threateningly on the individual named both men retreated.

At that moment Madame Clémenceau, peering over the crazy balustrade, began shrieking, "Come up, citizens, come up! He is here!"

Anastase recoiled again to the door. That the excitement was in some way connected with Hermine he was sure, but in what manner her presence could account for the mob of people now tumbling up the staircase he had no idea. One thought only remained to him—no one should get in to see her. He waited, fierce and uneasy. The persons on the stairs were some of them fellow-lodgers; some he recognized as belonging to his section, and most of them were, like himself, the dregs of Paris. Greatly to his surprise three National Guards in full uniform pushed through the rest, and one of them, shouldering his way on to the landing, demanded with authority to be told why he was sent for and by whom.

"By me," said Madame Clémenceau with unction. "I denounce the citizen Frochot here. Oh, that I ever took him under my roof! He has a cursed *ci-devant* concealed in his room!"

"You lie!" responded Anastase with great promptness. "Do you think, you silly old beldam, that I am a friend of *aristos*!" He gave a snort of laughter.

"He has a female *aristo* concealed in his room," went on Madame Clémenceau in a higher key. "She has been there since the tenth. He lets no one in, and he takes food to her when he thinks nobody is looking. But I have watched him, and so have others. Moreover we have listened at the door, and heard him speaking to her."

Anastase glanced about him and clenched his fists. Escape was impossible—but then he did not want to escape. Surely he could prevent the door from being opened!

"I swear it's all a lie!" he cried passionately. "You know it, you, Lepaux,

and you, Rameau." But there was no response.

"I swear to you by the nation that there is no one there, and never has been," continued Anastase in desperation. The sweat began to come out on his forehead, and it was only by an effort that he kept his hands off his accuser. "Is it likely there should be a damned *aristo* in my room—I who killed three Swiss on the tenth and helped to throw *ci-devants* out of the window of Capet's palace?"

"All very well," said the National Guard. "And doubtless the citizen is a good patriot and the *citoyenne*, in her zeal, has made a mistake. Therefore open the door and let us see inside."

Anastase gave a snarl of rage. "No!" he screamed with an oath. "You must take my word. My room is my own. There is no one there, I tell you."

"Liar—liar!" yelled *Mère Clémenceau*. "You know there is—and we will have her out!" A chorus from the landing and the stairs substantiated her.

The suppressed fury of this outburst and the fierce expectant faces turned up to him recalled to Anastase a sudden vision of something which he had witnessed a few days ago in the streets concerning a cat. They might do that to *Hermine*. No doubt he should have complied with the eminently reasonable request of authority, but then, too, he knew his world. At any rate he lost his head, and by doing so gave ample color to the charge against him.

The two nearest men, hurled backwards, brought down *Mère Clémenceau* in their fall. At once the tumult became indescribable. The first National Guard threw himself on the rebel;

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Anastase caught him neatly between the eyes. The uttermost rage and a kind of insensate joy possessed him. "I will not open!" he screamed. "Spawn of the devil, go to hell!" The space was so cramped that he really had a momentary advantage.

The whole stairway resounded with cries of "Kill him! kill him! Break down the door! Bring her out!" The second National Guard, abandoning his musket, prepared to throw himself likewise on the defender of aristocrats, and seeing this, Anastase suddenly remembered his knife. Before either of them could do anything the man's comrade, better inspired, seized his weapon by the barrel and swung it high above his head. The knife glittered uselessly in its owner's hand, and the butt of the musket, breaking down the arm he raised too late, caught Anastase with fearful force on the left temple. He gave vent to an inarticulate cry, and went down like a slaughtered animal. Next moment the door fell inwards, and with cries of "*Mort à l'aristocrate!*" the assailants poured into the citadel.

The sole occupant of the room was a rather sleepy but alarmed white cat, standing with arched, protestant back upon a heap of green and gold embroidery in the middle of the table. But Anastase, with that blood upon his hands which had not availed to save his own, was gone, for the sake of a cat, into a world to which (as is commonly held) they are not admitted.

Halfway down the staircase *Hermine*, to whom the subjugated *Mère Clémenceau* was whispering endearments, began very self-containedly to purr.

D. K. Broster.

OLD HOUSES AND ODD DREAMS.

There is a saying in the North of England among the wise women who sit by the chimney-corners that children born in old houses are never quite the same as those born under newer roof-trees, and, like most old sayings, it holds a certain measure of truth. For old houses (the actual bricks and timber of which they are made) exercise a curiously subtle influence upon those who live in them, as though the ghosts of former owners had not wholly given up their right of tenure, but still played the part of hosts and expected from their guests some return of old-world courtesies. Stories are often told of families who carry this practice of part ownership to the length of treating their shadowy predecessors much as they do their favorite dogs—enjoying the silent companionship while feeling no fear of the unseen presences that haunt their homes; and it is very possible that children born in such strangely overcrowded houses may well be, as the old countrywomen say they are, wise children; that is, silent, thoughtful children who are still in their play and love the twilight hours rather than the sunshine.

But not all old houses are ghost-ridden. There are some of quite respectable antiquity that are as dull and as matter-of-fact as the most severely modern of villa residences; houses that have never played a part either in romance or history, but have instead merely reflected through the silent years the uneventful lives of commonplace contented people. There are a hundred such still to be found in the deserted streets of slumbrous country towns; houses whose pedigree no one questions; houses solidly built and even yet capable of resisting time, wind, and weather (with a sturdy gallantry that

does excellent credit to their dead and forgotten builders), but that yet fail either to interest or to influence us. For in order to win our love and admiration an old house must possess some individual charm; some suggestion of possible romance, some hint of mystery; or else we feel for it merely the same sense of pity that a dishonored old age excites in us.

A house is, after all, a very human thing. Made for man, it becomes in time an actual part of himself; it is plastic enough to receive impressions in its early years, and its successive owners leave, consciously or unconsciously, the impress of their own personality upon it. But as the house grows older, its position towards those passing guests who spend either the spring, summer, autumn, or winter of their lives within its four walls is changed, and, consciously or unconsciously, it leaves instead the impress of its personality upon its tenants. The old house claims their love as no other home has ever done, and out of their kindly affection for its blackened beams and sun-yellowed walls grows a tenderness for the past, a mellowing of judgment, and more of those graces that are said to be the best possessions of a ripe old age. The stone, bricks, and timber, after the infinitely subtle way of so-called inanimate things, seem to import some measure of the wisdom they have gathered in the past into the hearts of the men and women who live in daily contact with them, and there is often to be seen a dignity in the manners of the very poorest, if their dwelling be not of yesterday. They take an honest pride in the cracks and bulges in the walls, in the insecurity of the stairs, and the inconvenience of the windows—a pride wholly distinct

and apart from the vulgar satisfaction some uplifted householders feel when entering into possession of some freshly painted and plastered mansion. They have learned to see beauty in the finger-marks of Time, and if the old house has taught them nothing else, this is in itself a valuable lesson.

It may be merely a fancy, but to my thinking there is something infinitely more pathetic in an old house seen in a neglected town street than in the most desolate ruins set proudly in the midst of a finely wooded landscape. I feel instinctively the same sense of pity as for some wreck of decayed gentility found in an almshouse, or the cold comfort of a workhouse ward, and I resent the insult of its poverty. The old house, like the old body, has known better days, and the one is, in all probability, as keenly sensitive to its pauper's dress as the other. But an even worse fate overtakes the house that never comes to the pauper's dress, but is renovated and restored by unskilful hands, directed by plentitude of pence combined with want of taste, until at last it stands in all the motley of rejuvenation, a sight to make the Heavenly Architect weep. Time-marks have been effaced, windows widened, stairs renewed, ceilings raised, and hot-water pipes run through the long galleries to warm the thin, pale blood of the new race who lack the sturdiness and strength of the older generations that lived and loved and died under the shelter of its gables when the old house was young.

All my life I have loved old houses; I was born in one, and it is my fond hope that I may die in one. For death holds no terrors for the old house; it has seen so many pass along the "dusty way," and has felt too often the sudden hush of the final silence fall upon its stairways and galleries. The superstition (common enough among the country-folk) that death climbs the

stairs could make no appeal to those who have lived all their lives between walls of fresh bricks and mortar, but we who have felt that other steps than ours mount, unheard, the old stairway, find it easy of belief. The common lament—could those walls but speak—has always seemed to me a somewhat absurd wish, seeing that they do speak, and speak very clearly and plainly, to all those who have learned their mute language. But, like well-bred and well-mannered persons, old houses exercise a wise reserve, and do not take the first-comer into their confidence or whisper their stories into unsympathetic ears.

Among the houses I know that best hold the traditions of an honorable past is one in a quiet street in an ancient city. The street itself has long since fallen out of fashion; it is narrow, and wears a sadly deserted air like some neglected beauty, and it is all unworthy of notice save for the low, heavily built stone archway at the furthest end, that leads into the cobbled courtyard where stands the old house. A flight of wide stone steps leads up to the great door, which opens to show a similar flight in blackened oak, the number of the steps, both outside and in, being (I believe) identical. The carved banisters, the lancet window that lights the staircase, the immense thickness of the walls, all give an indescribable sense of hush and quiet, as though the stately life of the past were once more possible of realization in this house that has surely not forgotten the early days of its pomp and prosperity. For here in the long oak gallery with its magnificently carved chimney-piece, the freedom of the city was presented to that luckless monarch James II., and it is easy, in the dancing firelight, to re-people the rooms and passages with ghosts—with the plumes and velvets, the ceremony and courtesy of those long-since dead and forgotten worthies.

Out of the windows the king could look into the quiet garden bounded by the city wall, and no doubt, in his heart, he would envy his loyal subjects the peaceful security of their home. The storms of the Civil Wars had left it untouched, and except for necessary repairs, succeeding centuries have done but little to harm it, so that it still stands as an excellent example of the city home of provincial potentates in the time of the Tudors.

A beautiful old country house was so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of irreverent owners who, seeing no beauty in its mullioned windows and oak panelling, like unskilful surgeons, maimed it until they succeeded in crippling it into some semblance of their own lack of taste. I knew the house in its happier days, and one of the delights of my childhood was to be shut up alone in the large oak hall where the handles of the doors were so cunningly fashioned to imitate the carving of the panels that it was quite possible to take hold of one or two unyielding ornaments before finding a way out of my comfortable prison. Over the chimney-piece the initials "E. R." (with a date underneath) always made a thrill pass through me as I remembered that the great queen had herself honored the old hall with her presence, and that nervous courtiers had perhaps fumbled over those very same door-handles before finding an exit for their royal mistress. I can never conjure up a vision of Elizabeth, with her pearls, her ruffs, and her auburn wig, without the background of that carved oak panelling and the hidden doors.

There may be no real foundation for the belief that there is any necessary connection between old houses and odd dreams, yet it is most certainly true that people either born, or having lived the greater part of their lives, in old houses are more peculiarly sensitive than others to the influence of dreams.

But the philosophy of dreams being an unfathomable art, there is no possibility of agreement on a subject so few of us, confessedly, even try to understand; for as each Protestant is his own Pope, so each dreamer is his own interpreter, and many and strange are the meanings—some fraught with dreadful mystery—that are given in all good faith to the simplest visions of the night. It is easy to understand why dreaming of a dog or a horse should bode well to the sleeper, for they are only living up to their characters as the best friends of man, but it is not so easy to explain why to dream that you are walking through a field of ripe barley or plucking a filbert from a thickly grown hedge should presage sickness and misfortune. One of the most human touches in that most human story of country life "*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*" is where Joan Durbeyfield, leaving the washtub and wringing the soapsuds from her tollworn hands, consults the "*Compleat Fortune-Teller*" for Tess. Though believing it to be an oracle that never fails, she is yet half afraid of its supernatural wisdom, and keeps it hidden away in the thatch of the old outhouse, for fear that its mere presence should bring trouble upon her. The "*Compleat Fortune-Teller*" was, no doubt, the recognized dream interpreter for all the countryside, but even to-day it is not only the peasantry who believe in the signs and wonders, omens and superstitions that can be constructed from the seemingly commonplace fabric of a simple dream.

Dreams have drawn a line—faint, shadowy, indistinct, across the warp and woof of history; they have turned the scale by putting a faint heart into a great commander; they have lost and won kingdoms. The visions of saints have given the world some of its most beautiful poetry, and the world of art owes much to the dreamers of dreams. "*Fortune comes in sleep*" has often

proved a true saying; yet men and women are half ashamed to confess to a belief in anything that so nearly touches the supernatural. Ours is pre-eminently a practical age when everything is weighed in the balance; if it is not judged to be useful to mankind, it is no longer accounted desirable.

Of what use is a dream? Does any one ever profit by the warning sent in a dream? Has a dream ever really saved the dreamer from impending misfortune? Of all the thousand stories told of dreams and their fulfilment, how many are true? This is the question above all others to which it is most difficult to find an answer, for the truth is known only to the dreamer himself, and all the evidence we have, or can possibly have, is his bare and unsupported word. And faith being a virtue long since out of fashion, dreams are dismissed as phenomena we cannot be expected to take very seriously. There is something intangible and incomprehensible about them; something akin to the spirit, as distinct from the body, that lies beyond the reach of the scientist's scalpel, and is baffling as the mystery of life itself. Yet the subject has fascinated poets and thinkers since the morning of the world, and in all probability will continue to fascinate them as long as time endures. Dreams represent the *terra incognita* of fancy into which every explorer must find his way alone and unaided, returning to tell his fancies or not as he pleases, and knowing there is no fear of vulgar competition or a crowd of followers penetrating into this land of heart's desire.

Dreams are more often indicative of a change in our spiritual life than of any sudden upheaval in our material existence; that this should be so is, indeed, a very part of their nature and essence. They represent in many cases the experiences of the soul, marking, as it were, the psychological moment

in a man's life; and a dream is impressive, not necessarily because it is odd or strange, but because of the extraordinary effect it produces on the dreamer. It is to this that the "Compleat Fortune-Teller" and books of a similar nature owed their enormous popularity, for, knowing that but few of us are capable of seeing the visions that delight poets, their compilers wisely gave a meaning to the night thoughts of simple folk. Green hedges, fields of ripe corn, the singing of birds, the gathering of fruit, crossing clear water, seeing a dead but not forgotten face, were all interpreted as warnings or promises, and the dreamer must needs go delicately and be prepared for fulfilment of the prophecy.

Repetition too, is held to add enormously to the value of a dream. "I dreamed three times that I was walking through a field of ripe barley, and three times that I was gathering filberts from the tree; and that means sorrow," a woman once said to me, and being shortly after left a widow, her faith in her dreams was greatly strengthened, for had she not received due warning, so that sorrow did not snatch her unawares? When I was a child I used to dream the same dream over and over again until I learned to know it as well as the pictures in my favorite story-book. I thought I was taken to a strange house and left alone in a room filled with old-fashioned furniture, while on either side of the wide fireplace hung two curtains made of yellow brocade of a quaint and unusual design. A terrible sense of fear held me whenever I looked at those curtains, and I used to wake trembling and yet not knowing why I was afraid. Before I grew up I went to stay in my dream-house, and found that the terrible curtains (exact as to color and design) hid nothing more alarming than two somewhat unsightly cupboards, filled with odds and ends of

lumber. But the sense of fear was amply justified, and the visit marked a distinct epoch in my life, for in that yellow-hung room I learned my first lesson of mistrust, and so lost some of the dearest of my childish illusions.

That state between sleeping and waking, when our brains seem unnaturally clear, and yet strange things happen—voices call to us, people stand by our bedside, we see shining lights and hear entrancing music—has been variously interpreted as an opening of our spiritual eyes and ears, or an unhealthy condition of the digestive organs. But whether we accept the mystical or the prosaic and wholly unsatisfying explanation, we cannot regard this semi-somnolence as a dream. In a real dream there is no pretence of wakefulness. Our actual surroundings have vanished, and we do not miss the body lying asleep on its bed, for our dream-bodies are as real to us and as tangible as those we have left for a season. In the East, a dream is still accounted a sacred thing, as it was in the days of the Hebrew Prophets, and there are, too, here in the West, scattered up and down among lonely hills and valleys, and even in the crowded streets of our great cities, mystics and thinkers who read a meaning in the visions we count as foolishness, and do not hesitate to declare that the truest wisdom comes to us in dreams.

It was to one of these I told the dream that has troubled me of late, much as the yellow-hung room haunted my childish fancy. It is again a dream-house standing in a dream-garden, but the curious feature of this house is that, though the garden at the back and the number and arrangement of the rooms are the same, the front of the building changes. Sometimes it faces a garden, and is approached by a long carriage-drive, more often it stands in the wide street of a quiet country town; but directly I open the door, I find

within everything unchanged—the square hall with the windows on either side; the wide flight of stairs with the oak gallery running along the top; the door beyond the hall facing me at the end of a long passage that leads into the garden; the sunny rooms, and the nest of bedrooms opening out of the galleries. It is a desirable house, a house it would be good to live in, and the garden is of quite exceptional size and beauty. Great fruit-trees, covered with blossom in the spring and laden with fruit in the autumn (for, like the Northern King in William Morris' poem, I have seen that garden through the windows in all the four seasons) grow close to the house; grass-covered terraces slope down to rose-walks and beds of tall flowering shrubs; I know there is water (though I have never seen it) and far beyond the trees and shrubs and flowers is wild moorland country with a blue haze of delicate mist rising to meet the sky-line.

Outside my dream-house all is peace, inside all is cheerfulness; unless I go up the stairs, cross the gallery, and face a curtain that hangs against the wall, when a horrible sense of fear comes over me and I tremble like a very coward. Behind the curtain are five steps; they lead to a second and shorter gallery or passage, into which three rooms open. In spite of my fear, I force myself to go into those rooms. They are large and handsomely furnished, and their windows look out upon the garden; there is nothing ghostly or strange about them, and I try to argue myself out of my fear. The question perplexing me is always the same. An unexpected guest has come, for whom there is no place prepared; shall he sleep in one of these terror-haunted rooms, or must I give up my own and sleep here myself? At this point I awake.

"You have never seen this house except in your dreams?" my friend said

at last, and I told him no, but that one day I was sure it would be my home. He agreed, adding, "I would not be in too great a hurry to find it, if I were you." There was something impressive in the manner of his speech, and I did not ask him for any further interpretation, for at last I had found the

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meaning of my oft-recurring dream. In that house it may be that it has been willed I am to die. But death is a hard word; let me rather say when at last I open the door of the house I know so well but have never seen, I shall pass through it to my final inheritance in the Kingdom of Dreams.

IBSEN.

Ibsen and Tolstoy have been the only two world-powers in literature in our time, world-powers such as Goethe or Hugo were in past generations; and both of them have attained to their universal celebrity in spite of great obstacles of language; while Ibsen has attained to it in spite of still greater obstacles raised by his character and the nature of his genius. Not only was he the native of a small and outlying province of the European world, but there was also a kind of provincial fierceness and bitterness in his mind. He hated men and women as they only can be hated in small societies. For a long while he hated his countrymen as a race and with a sense of personal injury against them. He was too proud, however, to betray this hatred in mere railing and invective. He was determined that no one should see any pique in his writings; and therefore, as men of strong will and sensitive nerves are apt to put on an air of ironic impassivity to protect the quick of their souls against the world, so he chose the most impersonal form of literature to write in and treated it more impersonally than any writer before him. The drama is more impersonal than the novel, and prose is more impersonal than poetry. Therefore Ibsen, after writing much poetry and some open satire, gave up both for a prose drama which is only now and then openly

satirical, which usually professes to be an impartial, unimpassioned, representation of life. If it had really been this it is not likely that Ibsen would have become a world-power in literature, at least in his own time; but, of course, it was nothing of the sort. Matthew Arnold said that poetry was a criticism of life. The definition will not apply to any great poetic drama, or, indeed, to any kind of great poetry; but it will apply very exactly to Ibsen's prose drama, which is indeed the criticism of life, or, rather, of humanity, of a man full of curiosity about both, but with very little love of either. Now, the world is, and has been for fifty years or more, in a very critical frame of mind. Matthew Arnold, unconsciously no doubt, expressed that frame of mind when he said that poetry was a criticism of life. What he meant was that the modern world would like to turn poetry into a criticism of life. It has not succeeded in doing that; but it has produced in Ibsen's work an almost purely critical drama, which does not, like comedy, criticize for diversion and the fun of the thing, which is not directed, again, like comedy, at recognized follies and absurdities, but which criticizes because to its author criticism seemed to be the highest business in life, because it was his nature not so much to take part in life as to criticize it. In a great tragedy we are absorbed

in the series of events. The characters and their fate interest us as if they were our nearest friends. We may as an afterthought ask ourselves why Hamlet or Othello came to their doom; but it is only an afterthought. In Ibsen's plays that sort of question is the very essence of the interest. Hedda Gabler makes a mess of her life; and as we read the play we ask ourselves all the time what is wrong with this woman and her kind; what is it that carries her to destruction? We read the play for an answer to that question; and the play was written to give an answer to it. We care nothing for Hedda herself. Nor did Ibsen care for her at all. He was merely interested in her as a type—one of the many types which he disliked. He was curious about her, and about many other kinds of sick men and women; and out of his curiosity, out of his scientific, almost medical, desire to understand the causes of their different kinds of sickness he made most of his plays. An Ibsen play, in fact, is usually rather a diagnosis than a creation; and since our age is very fond of diagnosis and has more curiosity about life than joy in it, Ibsen has been a world-power in modern literature.

Yet other writers have been curious and critical, have diagnosed like Ibsen, yet have not got his world-wide fame. And the reason why they have failed where he has succeeded is that he alone has achieved the almost incredible feat of expressing his criticisms in admirable acting plays. Ibsen learnt the tricks of his trade from accomplished French dramatists, such as Scribe; but he alone was able to apply their technique to his own kind of subject-matter. He alone was able to make a drama about the things which most interested the thinking people of his time. No one now pretends that Ibsen's plays do not act well; and the wonder of it is that they act well in

spite of their absence of action. There is a strange dramatic intensity in them which we can scarcely analyze, but which, so far as we can analyze it, appears to be an intensity of curiosity. Ibsen manages to make us feel that in his plays something very important is happening, and, though we may care nothing about the people to whom it is happening, yet we care about the issue, because it appears to us to be in some way representative of life. A whole perverted civilization seems to make a foolish end of itself in *Hedda Gabler*, and in *Rosmersholm* we see the incapacity of a whole overwrought generation for simple natural passion. In *Rosmersholm* Ibsen has sympathy with his two victims, and circumstances may seem to some readers to bring about their doom. But the doom is really implicit in their own characters as it is in the characters of all of those who come to a bad end in Ibsen's plays. He is, indeed, the most inevitable of playwrights, and that is the chief reason why we follow his plays with such breathless interest. However much he may suppress it and question it, he has a great imagination. Though he forced himself to write in prose he was born a poet, and wrote poetry before he put on his prose mask against the world. This fact we ought never to forget in considering his plays. He was not really a calm, unimpassioned spectator of life. There is suppressed passion in all that he wrote; and the old, long hidden poetry of his mind broke out again in curious fantastic forms in his later plays, in *The Master Builder*, and *John Gabriel Borkman*, and *Little Eyolf*, and *When We Dead Awaken*, as suppressed romance breaks out in curious fantastic forms in our modern life. That poetry is often incomprehensible because, no doubt, it was unconscious. Ibsen towards the end scarcely knew what he wanted to do, as we, when romance revives in us, scarcely know

what we want to do. Poetry seized him again like a blind passion and played odd tricks with him. He tried still to be the impassive chess player; but the pieces began to play themselves

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or rather to dance strangely on the board. The result is like nothing else in literature; but it is curiously interesting, and it marks the end of the age of realism.

A. Clutton-Brock.

HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

There is no such thing in Paris as a ladies' club, — so the French Ambassador told us in an after-dinner speech which he recently made at the Lyceum Club. French women, he said, stayed at home, and he certainly implied that they did well. To a Frenchman it seemed strange to see women taking part in all sorts of active work outside their homes, — fighting electoral campaigns, organizing charitable undertakings, &c.; and through all his French politeness M. Cambon let it be seen that he deprecated such activities, and regarded them as an indication of something lacking in English domestic life. French women, he declared, played in their homes a part quite different from that played by English women in theirs. A French woman did not attend simply to her *ménage*, or to the education of her children, but she took an active interest in all her husband's business; indeed, he added, her husband consulted her in everything, and on most occasions followed her advice. The result was that she found at home all the satisfaction and all the responsibility inseparable from power, and consequently "had no pleasure in meddling with things outside." Legally, English wives occupied a better position than their French sisters, but actually the latter were better off and better satisfied. No feminist movement, he pointed out, had ever succeeded in France.

M. Cambon's criticism is well worth serious consideration, but it by no

means applies to the whole nation. Among the working population of England the wife's opinion on business matters counts for a great deal. Below a certain point in the social scale a man is never ashamed to say that he has taken his wife's advice. So natural does it seem to him to do so that he will sometimes quote her when she has not spoken, using her name to cover the disparity between his own first and second thoughts. Constantly an artisan may be heard to say: "I wanted to buy this [or sell the other], but my wife would not let me"; "I wanted to refuse this or that work [to remove here or there], but my wife would not hear of it." Surely the workmen are well advised to admit their wives to their consultations. The greater part of the laying out of the income necessarily depends upon the wife; the ease which comes of its augmentation, and the hardships which accompany its diminution, are felt first by her. The wants of the children are best known to her. She is naturally the most anxious to get money, and the least willing to risk it. Unless she is unusually foolish, she is likely to be her husband's best counsellor, and even where no exceptional degree of sympathy exists between them the working man knows it.

But go a little higher up the social ladder, and things are different. Not only would the husband feel a humiliation in openly acting on his wife's advice on a matter which concerned his

business, but she herself is proud of taking no interest in it. The less educated women of the middle class — the wives, for instance, of the less well-to-do city men — have very little desire for any outside interest. Their children, their households, their neighbors, and their dress supply them with all the matter for thought that they wish for. They enjoy an amount of financial security which the working woman is without, and they lump together "business" and "politics" as two things which they are rather proud of not "understanding," and as belonging altogether to the province of "gentlemen." The workman and his wife stand on a level. They have had the same elementary schooling, and have each learned what else they know entirely from the experience of life. In the class above them, on the other hand, the pair have, so to speak, "specialized." The man has probably had a good commercial education, while the woman, as likely as not, has learned very little that is not domestic. She belongs to the most old-fashioned set of women in the country, the only one which still fears the slightest approach to masculinity in mind or manner, firmly believing that in that approach lies the destruction of feminine attraction. Such women are short-sighted. They see only the beginning of the truth, and forget that the qualities which attract admiration are not always those which retain friendship. From every point of view, it seems to us that this division of interests is unfortunate. That a man should be able to discuss his affairs with an intimate friend whose interests are inextricably bound up with his own is, on the face of it, both natural and wholesome. The wife's advice might not be always worth having, but in putting the case to some one else a man sees it in a slightly different light, is likely to become aware of details which before escaped

his notice, and is almost sure to avoid headstrong and impulsive action. Besides, a critic without technical knowledge is very often a great help to a man whose daily work tends to shut out all sides but the technical side. An intelligent person with no knowledge whatever of how to put on paint may often give an idea which is well worth having to the artist whose mind is too much fixed on his palette.

Among more intellectual people the same reticence too often prevails, but for quite different reasons. The wife has, as a rule, no false notions of the attraction of feminine ignorance, and an educated woman is seldom exactly stupid. Almost always her husband admires her quickness of mind. At the same time, he has now and then a profound distrust of her judgment. She is apt to be "viewy," and has a strong inclination to go off upon side-issues. It is extraordinarily irritating to see any one do this, more especially if they argue their side-points well. The talk of a woman who insists on departing down the blind alleys of speculation which fringe the high road of every practical discussion is a pure hindrance to an able man who desires to arrive at a right decision. But these reasonable grounds of reticence are, after all, the least common. Much more often the man is moved by nothing but the desire of keeping his own counsel. With a few men this is constitutional. In the smallest as in the greatest matter they will rely upon their own wits alone. They make no overweening estimate of their own powers, but they are irrevocably convinced of their own inability for mental co-operation. These may be strong men, but they have some lack of sympathy in their nature. They fail to placate their fellow-creatures, and they seldom succeed in their profession. Another thing which will often keep a man silent about his work is the fact

that it does not interest him. To him it means his daily bread and the price of his recreation. He does all he can to divide his life into two; and the better he likes his wife, the more determined he is that she should belong to the leisure half of his life,—the only half, in his eyes, that is worth having.

More common even than this type is the man who tells his wife nothing of his affairs because he is distressed by the suspicion that she is cleverer than he. Probably she appears so. She has more time for desultory reading and desultory thinking, and has a greater number of ideas on a greater number of subjects. A Frenchman would instantly put his suspicions to the test, and utilize the worldly advantage arising from the fact of her better mental equipment, if fact it proved to be. But worldly advantage is not the paramount desire of the average Englishman. He would rather risk his prosperity than his illusions. Accordingly he keeps his affairs to himself. She could not do, he assures himself, what he does. That requires a really hard head. Women's minds are differently and far less strongly made; that is why they move so easily. Sometimes he feels with a certain sadness that he is falling into a position in his own house which is that of the stronger, but not the superior, partner,—the man who supplies the money, but not the brains. He has a sense that he is made allowance for, that there are things which he is hardly expected to understand, and that many ideas which please his wife are put away as soon as he appears. Much is kept from him for his good. He also would like to keep something to himself, so he clings to the secrets of his work. That he should do so is very natural; but, all the same, it is very foolish, and that not only because he goes without the help his wife's quick wits might give

him. Probably his estimate of their comparative abilities is true enough, truer a good deal than the one that she makes; but then she has such imperfect data upon which to form a judgment. She never sees his mind at its best, which is when it is occupied with "shop." If she did, she would come to a new conclusion about his powers.

Where a man makes a profession of the government of his estate, as often happens in the extreme upper class, his wife generally seems to know as much about his business as he does. Perhaps this is less because he consults her, or desires or takes her advice, than because its details naturally come before her, and embrace all those human and personal interests to which every woman will apply her mind who is not completely given up to frivolity; in fact, who has any mind to apply. The same thing is seen among the clergy, and again in the political world. Every woman, whatever her original status, becomes a politician if fate throws her into contact with the *personnel* of politics. It is to the middle class, then, and to that only in some of its subdivisions, that M. Cambon's words are applicable. Almost all national advantages are beset with corresponding dangers. The element of choice is the best thing in our marriage system. The average young English man and woman marry for love, and begin their joint life with an intense preoccupation in one another's personalities. Very often they are tempted to forget that such absorption cannot last, and they do not always cultivate common outside interests with sufficient care. In the same rank of life, the young Frenchman and his wife are in danger of no such forgetfulness. No doubt some of them are in their generation wiser than we. "He that would thrive should ask his wife" is a proverb which embodies the wisdom of the common people, and

many middle-class husbands might remember it to their advantage. It has been said that no woman has any more dangerous rival than her husband's

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daily work, and surely an Englishwoman who can identify herself with this ever new and powerful interest may hope to have no rivals at all.

SENSATIONS UNDER ANÆSTHETICS.

Discussion has recently been proceeding as to the sensations felt on falling from a height. Feelings of exhilaration and even of pleasurable excitement, when the end appears to be almost certain death by extreme violence, would seem to be a by no means uncommon experience in such circumstances. The workings of the mind in moments of peril or of supreme crisis have often been described, and there is quite a literature of the subject. Descriptions of sensations experienced during the administration of anæsthetics are not so common. It is the usual attitude to the subject to assume that there are no experiences under anæsthetics. The state of unconsciousness induced by such agents as chloroform or ether or even nitrous-oxide gas is generally profound. There is, it is said, no feeling of the pain of operation, and usually there is no record left in the memory of any sensations during the interval of unconsciousness. Nevertheless, this is not the universal experience.

Every one who has been completely under the influence of an anæsthetic has practically passed by a series of stages through the experience of dying so far as the functions of the mind are concerned, and it is only reasonable to suppose that in a residuum of cases there must be a recollection of feelings and sensations of more than usual interest. It is well known that the mind may be profoundly altered in the stages of incomplete anæsthesia. An agent like hashish will produce illusions and hallucinations of the most extravagant description, and in particular color con-

ceptions of indescribable brilliancy. The effects of opium, so vividly portrayed by De Quincey, in increasing the vividness of memory and stimulating the brilliancy of imagination in a dream-like condition are well known. Some few years ago we made an attempt on a small scale to collect from friends and ordinary acquaintances some record of experiences under anæsthetics. The result was not without interest, although in a large proportion of the cases the replies were to the effect that the mind was simply a blank and that there were no experiences, or none which could be recalled. It is perhaps questionable whether there are any sensations which can be clearly recalled more than a few hours after the experience. In the case of chloroform and ether the most usual experience seemed to be the sensation of a double personality, sometimes described as the feeling of a disembodied spirit, either just before losing consciousness or on "coming to." Either because of the deep effects of those agents or through some other cause, sensations which were often said to have been tremendous could in none of the cases be clearly described. In the case of nitrous-oxide gas, however, the effects were often distinctly remembered. In one case, in which the impressions were written down within two hours, the record is particularly vivid. The writer maintains that he never completely lost consciousness of the ego, although the operator told him afterwards that he answered to the usual tests for complete anæsthesia. The

first experience, as described in the few interesting pages of manuscript before us, was a growing sensation in the mind, after a few inspirations, of yellow-red light. This was soon accompanied by a terrible panting or throbbing metallic sound, at first like a steam engine at work, but increasing in intensity. These beats, which were comparatively slow and regular at first, seemed to close in upon each other in an ascending scale, the interval between them rapidly diminishing. "This was accompanied," the narrative continues, "by a feeling of being engaged in a struggle in which my whole being was tasked, and which can only be described as a sensation of fighting desperately for life. I clearly recall that the perception flashed upon me quite early that the idea of escaping pain was a terrible mistake, for that when the intervals between the beats would disappear I should be outwardly unconscious, while the feeling of anguish would be so great that it would overwhelm any sensation of pain however terrible. As the whirr grew more rapid, I felt that it would be impossible to bear any more, though it progressed rapidly to a climax, my brain seeming to be frozen or paralyzed into a kind of metallic lump."

A most interesting feature of this account is that the pulsating noise appeared to decrease exactly as it had increased, and that towards the end it was prolonged into normal consciousness and, curious to say, connected with the narrator's own breathing. "As I woke up," he continues, "I seemed to be breathing or panting heavily, though I think not really so. I connected it with the pulsations, which had slowed down to time with these sounds of breathing. The impression which filled my mind was that I had been through some tremendous experience. I remained perfectly still for a little time, trying to fix it in my mind, and it was

at this moment that I described it to myself as a fight for life. One point I am perfectly clear and certain about. I did not have any consciousness whatever of the pain of the operation. I seemed to recognize beforehand that it would be impossible to feel it; the other sensations were 'too overwhelming.' Apart from its great interest as a record of actual experience in relation to pain, made immediately after the event, this account has other features. A noteworthy fact, for instance, consists in the connection made between the beats or throbs experienced and the subject's own breathing. If this be the correct interpretation, it raises an interesting point. As the interval between the beats seemed rapidly to diminish as progress was made towards complete unconsciousness and to lengthen out again as consciousness was regained, it would seem to be implied that the sense which distinguishes the lapse of time was being progressively diminished as consciousness faded. The corresponding effect in the mind, however, was an apparent shortening of time itself, which thus progressed towards its own annihilation in unconsciousness. Here we have in view an interesting question which touches many debatable subjects.

It would be a considerable service to knowledge if we had a collection of accurately described experiences under anæsthetics. De Quincey has described in an ever-memorable passage the effect of opium on the imagination and on the emotions. The dream of the morning of a mighty day, a day of crisis and of final hope, the battle, the strife and the agony evolving like a great drama or a piece of music, the passion deepening: some mightier cause at stake than ever yet the sword had pleaded or trumpet proclaimed, the hurrying to and fro, the trepidations of innumerable fugitives; darkness, light, tempest and human faces; clasped

hands, heartbreaking partings and everlasting farewells: "And with a sigh the sound was reverberated, everlasting farewells—and again, and yet again reverberated, everlasting farewells":—it has passed into literature. And all this gorgeous phantasmagoria of emotions, says a medical man, due to a

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few scruples of the juice of the poppy. Experiences under anæsthetics in general are not of this kind; but if they give, even in a few cases, results such as those just described as occurring under nitrous-oxide gas they are well worthy of being systematically recorded and analyzed.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

E. P. Dutton & Company will publish shortly the "Burford Papers," being the letters of "Daddy" Crisp, and other studies of a Century, 1745-1845; also under the title of "A Woman of Wit and Wisdom" the biography of Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, the translator of Epictetus, and one of the Bas Bleu Society; "Jottings of an Old Solicitor" by Sir John Hollams; and "Researches in Sinai" by Prof. Petrie.

It often happens that it takes longer to write history than to make it. A case in point is the Boer war. The Times history of that war has but just reached its fourth volume, which brings the story down to the end of Lord Roberts's command. As to the official history of the war, the English Government has already spent \$110,000 upon it and the first volume is yet to be published. It is expected to be ready some time this summer.

In a recent letter to the Rationalist Press Association, Professor Ernest Haeckel writes:

As many members of the R.P.A. are interested in my work, "The Riddle of the Universe," they will be pleased to hear that two hundred thousand copies have been printed of the German original; that it has appeared in fifteen different translations, including recent translations into Japanese, Chinese and

Hebrew; and that more than six thousand letters have reached me in regard to it in the last six years.

Fresh volumes of essays are especially welcome at this season, and "The Shell-Gatherers" brings summer in its title. The author, Katherine Burrell, writes in an easy, pleasant style, full of quotation and allusion but not erudite, on such topics as "Being Kind in Our Own Way," "The Judgment of Juliet," "Gilpinian Holidays," "Gift Horses," "The Arid Table-land of Middle Life," "Mrs. Nickleby and Betsy Trotwood," "Bookshops and Book-buyers," and "The Fifes of June." Her reflections are marked by practical good sense, agreeably touched with imagination and humor. E. P. Dutton & Co.

Under the title "Science and Idealism" Houghton, Mifflin & Co. publish the address which Professor Hugo Münsterberg of Harvard delivered at Yale last autumn, on the foundation established there for the purpose of giving Harvard professors an opportunity to be heard by Yale men. Professor Münsterberg used this opportunity to present a plea for idealism and to show its relations to science and art and civilization. He argued the existence and importance of absolute values, and of standards by which

it is possible to discriminate between the true and untrue, the good and the bad, the real and the unreal. It was a noble theme, fitly presented.

But for a sad drop into the commonplace toward the close, almost unstinted praise might be given to "The Red-Haired Woman" in spite of its flaring title. A story of the Irish land-war, the chief actors are not peasants but Irish gentry of the old school, and the hospitality, the daring, the individuality, and the family affection, with the shrewd humor, the whims and the superstitions, are presented in a series of vivid pictures of the romantic rather than the realistic school. The figure of Madam O'Curry, at one hundred and five still dominating her children and grand-children, is one of the most striking in recent fiction. The author, Louise Kenny, has a rich vocabulary and uncommon mastery of detail. There is material in the book for a sequence of short stories of unusual merit, and one is tempted to wish it had been used in that form. E. P. Dutton & Co.

The strife between Mexican and American interests in old California is the theme of Marah Ellis Ryan's new novel, "For the Soul of Rafael," and the central figures are a worthless and profligate scion of the old stock, a high-spirited girl, half-dedicated to the convent, whom his mother persuades that to reclaim his soul and fortune for the Church will be a nobler mission, an outlawed cousin who terrorizes the whole region by his raids, a coquettish and unprincipled American widow, and her brother-in-law, a stalwart young stock-buyer. With such actors

the plot cannot fail to be full of incidents, but the denouement will surprise the most experienced novel-reader. The book is handsomely printed, decorated with margins in burnt umber, and illustrated from photographs taken especially for it. For the curious Spanish music which marks the chapter divisions, the author expresses indebtedness to the Southwest Society of the Archaeological Institute of America. A. C. McClurg & Co.

According to "The Library" fourteen fresh copies of the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays have been brought to light since Mr. Sidney Lee published his census of First Folios in 1902. These bring the total of "known extant" from 158 to 172. Of these 106 are still in Great Britain, while as many as 61 are in the United States. For a large proportion of these two insatiate individual collectors, The London Times remarks, are responsible, Mr. H. C. Folger, of New York, and Mr. Marsden Perry, of Providence; and when it is added that Mr. Perry, of Providence, gave no less than £10,000 for a set of four Folios in 1905, all wonder will cease that the westward emigration of First Folios has mounted with the new century to the rate of something like two per annum. Yet of the new fourteen examples it cannot be denied that five at least, and those among the finest specimens, are well held in Great Britain. These belong, in order of merit, to Lady Wantage, the Duke of Norfolk, the Bishop of Truro, Bodley's Library, and the Society of Antiquaries (Scotland). Birmingham is said to have the only municipal library in England which can boast the possession of a First Folio.

